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THE GREAT ELM.

FROM a friend's house had I gone forth,
And wandering at will
O'er a wide country West and North
Without or vale or hill,
I came beneath the broken edge
Of higher sloping ground,
Where an old Giant from the ledge
O'erlook'd the landscape round :

A towering Elm that stood alone,
Last of an ancient rank,
And had great barky roots out-thrown
To buttress up the bank ;
His rough trunk of two hundred years
In girth a pillar gave
As massive as the Norman piers
That rise in Durham's nave ;

But this for stony roof and wall
Upliving timber held,
Where never in its forest tall
Had woodman lopp'd or fell'd :
Above its crown no wind so fierce
Had warp'd the shapely green,
And scarce with bated breath might pierce
Its caves of leafy screen.

It seem'd in that dark foliage laid
Suspended thought must dwell ;
As in those boughs that overshadow
The river-sides of Hell,
That fabled Elm of Acheron,
Within the gates of death,
Which once Æneas look'd upon—
As Virgil witnesseth—
Whose leafage the last refuge was
And haven of mortal dreams,

That clustering clung thereto because
They might not pass the streams.

Now suddenly was I aware
That on the grassy shelf
A spirit was waiting for me there,
A coy seraphic elf—
My other half-self, whom I miss
In life's familiar moods,
And ken of only by his kiss
In sacred solitudes ;
And for that rare embrace have borne
With Fate and things distraught,
The wanhope of my days forlorn,
My sins, have counted nought.

He is of such immortal kind,
His invit is so clean,
So conscient with the eternal Mind—
The self of things unseen,
That when within his world I win,
Nor suffer mortal change,
I am of such immortal kin
No dream is half so strange.

Alas, I have done myself great wrong
Truckling to human care,
Am shamed to ken myself so strong
And nobler than I dare :
And yet so seldom doth he grant
The comfort of his grace,
So fickle is he and inconstant
To any time or place,
That since he chose that place and time
To come again to me,
I'd hold him fast by magic rhyme
Forever to that tree :
As there in lavish self-delight,
Godlike and single-souled,
I lay until the dusk of night
Came creeping o'er the wold.—ROBERT BRIDGES.

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF AUGUSTE RODIN.

BY ANTHONY M. LUDOVICI.

II.

'We are the penultimates!' ('*Nous sommes les avant-derniers!*')—thus used Rodin to sum up his criticism of his Age. At the time I was with him, the neo-Impressionist school was just coming to the fore: Gauguin and Van Gogh were becoming celebrities; and with some apprehension Rodin saw all the old canons and traditions of Art being blasted to the four winds. He had little hope for the future, and in the sense that he could see about him but few whose conscience was in their work as wholly as his was, he was probably right in regarding himself as an *avant-dernier*. I have seen him dismiss an assistant and his work a dozen times with the request, 'Please, Mr. X., go and study that a little more closely!'—not a hint of what was wrong, not a suggestion of how to put it right—simply '*étudiez cela encore un peu!*' It might have been a hand, a leg, a baby's head—no matter! Rodin spoke as a workman who knew what arduous tasks he had once imposed upon himself, and was not prepared to pass slipshod or unconscientious work produced by others.

His own fastidious and searching study of planes in his modelling was proof enough of the immense seriousness and pains with which he approached the simple craft of his calling, and he was quick to detect cardboard effects (*effets de carton*) in the modelling of his contemporaries or assistants. As a tribute to his artistic conscience, a story which he used cheerfully to tell against himself concerning his magnificent bust of Henri Rochefort is worth mentioning here. As everybody knows, Henri Rochefort was not only the impetuous and fearless editor of the *Intransigeant*, he was also a busy politician. He could, therefore, ill afford the time that Rodin needed in order to produce one of his laboriously accurate and lifelike busts. Thus, growing weary of the repeated sittings, and quite misunderstanding the artist's untiring exactness in his work, Rochefort gave his own account to the world of what took place in Rodin's studio. 'I go to Monsieur Rodin

in the morning,' he said, 'and with infinite pains the sculptor at last decides to place a tiny little pellet of clay (*une toute petite boulette*) somewhere on the face of my bust. I return in the afternoon, and with the same infinite pains M. Rodin at last decides to remove that very same pellet! And so it goes on and on!'

In view of this conscientiousness, which was proverbial, it will surprise no one to hear that Rodin distrusted so-called 'moments of inspiration.' The rigorous honesty of his scientific mind caused him to fear precisely that which the romantic artist most ardently covets and waits for: the exalted mood, the lambent eyes, and the quivering nostril of creative passion. With the artists who rely on such attacks of frenzy, and produce their masterpieces as if some higher power were whispering in their ear, directing their judgment and guiding their hand, Rodin had no more sympathy than if he had been a city financier. Like the celebrated actor, Coquelin Aîné, he was convinced that great artistic feats were only possible through knowledge and a perfect understanding of the technique of the art he mastered. 'Inspired moments,' he would say, 'by inducing a condition akin to intoxication, may cause the artist to forget the very principles on which the adequate interpretation of his idea most certainly depends.' If, therefore, Rodin seemed at times to exaggerate his modelling, or to leave rough excrescences of clay upon his figures, as if in the hurry of exaltation and inspired fervour, we should always remember that these artifices were all deliberate and completely conscious, and that he would have scorned to find, as the romantic artist frequently does, in his more sober moments of reflection, that his work contained either more or less than he had actually intended to put into it. 'Sculpture is an art of hollows and projections' (*de creux et de bosses*), he repeated again and again, and one of the fundamental rules of his technique was that these hollows and projections should be calmly and coldly determined, and that their intensification, if such were needed, should be the outcome rather of deliberation than of chance.

Many people have called attention to Rodin's ardent love of Nature, and then pointed to his work as if a good deal of it appeared to contradict rather than to confirm this love. Such critics are inclined to argue that when the love of Nature presides, as it did in Rodin, over all other emotions, a greater fidelity to Nature's own forms might reasonably be expected in the work it inspired.

But the anomaly here, if anomaly there be, surely resides in the minds of these critics themselves. Rodin would have told them that he saw Nature more vital, more highly energetic, than they did. He saw it as it is—that is to say, *alive*, with the sap of life running through its forms. Once he explained to me why, in 'La Pensée' (a head in a cap, resting on a block of marble), he had left the marble block on which the head reposes in a rough state. He said it was an experiment. He wished to see whether he could make the head so exuberantly alive, so thoroughly pulsating with life, that it imparted vitality even to the inert mass of marble beneath it. 'I wanted the marble below to look as if the blood from that head were circulating through it,' were Rodin's words. And all those who have examined this piece of sculpture at the Luxemburg Museum will, I imagine, agree that he has succeeded in his aim.

With regard to the curious little nodules that occasionally appear, particularly on the heads of his figures, he offered the same explanation. 'The marble or the bronze,' he would say, 'can represent the dead form; but we who look on a live creature realise that it is pulsating with life, that the skin quivers with the blood beneath it.' It was in his effort to obtain that quivering of the living flesh, that he made, among other modifications of the surface of his busts, those deliberate accidents in the modelling.

Truth to tell, his love of Nature was the most powerful passion of his being. He studied her with all the humility and devotion of a Hindu *chela*. '*Quelle science merveilleuse !*' he would exclaim, when brought face to face with one of Nature's marvels; and then, shaking his head, he would smile resignedly, as if, despite his long and arduous study of her, she continued to baffle him. I remember the first occasion on which he used this expression to me. One of his ducks had made it quite plain to us, by her long and conspicuous spells of absence from the garden, that she must have built a secret nest somewhere, and that in this unknown retreat she was intending to rear a brood of young ones. A former brood she had hatched had been entirely destroyed by the dogs, and she was evidently determined that this time she would secure her young ones' safety by absolute privacy. No one could trace the position of her nest; for, although she would always appear at feeding time when once she had eaten her share and slaked her thirst, she would as regularly waddle off again, as quietly and as unostentatiously as possible, and remain hidden for the rest of the day. Now

Rodin and I tried several times to follow her, but always without success. The moment she became aware that anyone was watching her movements, she merely set off upon an apparently purposeless exploration of the whole property and, resting nowhere, would lead her pursuers such a dance, that they were glad to abandon their object. Then, when she was perfectly satisfied that she was not being followed, she would waddle silently away to her mysterious haunt. It was only after this resourceful creature had hopelessly defeated us again and again, that Rodin at last turned to me and exclaimed with more joy than irritation: '*Quelle science merveilleuse!*'

This love of Nature doubtless accounted not only for the extreme simplicity of Rodin's home, but also for the rigid plainness of his tastes in food and entertainment. From the standpoint of his Nature worship he judged all things, and was in this respect the ideal antithesis of Whistler, who thought that Nature was usually wrong. For instance, Rodin used occasionally to visit the Palais Royal to have one of the 3.50 fr. luncheons there. He did this no longer from *gourmandise*, but chiefly because the Palais Royal itself is beautiful, and he was sentimentally disinclined to abandon an old habit which in former days had afforded him great pleasure. Whenever he returned from such a meal, however, it was Madame Rodin and I who had to bear the brunt of the indignation he felt over everything connected with it; and the whole of the evening he would groan over the stupidity and vulgarity of a generation that could allow so marked a deterioration in quality to pass unperceived and uncorrected by them. 'Ah, the food is no longer what it used to be!' he would exclaim. 'It is downright bad. They manage to spoil the simplest things—even poor plain French beans!' (*Ils savent abîmer les choses les plus simples—même nos pauvres haricots verts nature!*) Of the garish and very fashionable restaurants along the Boulevards, he also had little good to say. 'These are shops,' he would cry, 'fit for *pignoufs*! One cannot blame their proprietors. If people will be *pignoufs* it is just as well that there should be men about who know how to treat them as such!'

Rodin's great reverence for Nature, and his keen appreciation of the 'all-pervading domain of mystery which is everywhere under our feet and among our hands,' formed the basis of his religious convictions; for the fact that he was a profoundly religious man may be gathered from his very works themselves. Such

pieces as 'The Creation of Man,' 'The Hand of God,' and 'The Creation of Woman' bear sufficiently eloquent testimony of his pious spirit, while his treatment of such subjects as the 'St. John' reveals his deep understanding of the momentous epoch for which it stands. The Bible too was one of his favourite *livres de chevet*, and he delighted in expounding his own subtle interpretations of many of its passages. 'How foolish people must be not to see the truth in this book!' he often declared. 'Its pages teem with morals that are perennially modern!'

The condition of the Church in France was a source of the gravest anxiety to the author of 'Le Grand Penseur'; and he deplored the dissolution of the religious societies, which deprived poor children of the teaching afforded to them by these bodies. He believed that the young and the illiterate of all nations require dogma, and that the art underlying the ritual of the Catholic Church had a refining influence upon the minds of all classes. Thus he regarded the steady decline of the Church in France as a distressing sign of the times.

One of his favourite excursions on Sunday afternoon was to go to Paris to attend Vespers at Notre Dame, and those of the congregation who did not know him must often have been puzzled by the venerable old gentleman who, sitting with his eyes shut and his chin resting on his chest, listened so attentively to the service. He loved beautiful buildings; he was also very fond of ecclesiastical music; but, above all, he was happy to share the religious emotions of the congregation and to feel the influence of the old-world gravity and calm. Nor was he in the least vague about his conception of the Deity. He seemed able to reconcile a robust pantheism with a very real sense of God as a Person, as an Eternal Father, and would gently rebuke anyone who, wishing to adapt religion to modern notions, extended the idea of God to an all-pervading impersonal Power. Once, whilst conversing with a lady about the petty annoyances of human life, and the tendency that each man has to magnify his own woes until they appear to him events of almost universal importance, the lady happened to make a remark concerning the Deity which revealed the rationalistic tendency to remove Him ever farther and farther away from human concerns. She said: 'How God must laugh sometimes at our self-conceit and the pretentiousness of our little joys and woes!' Rodin smiled indulgently at his guest, but it was quite plain that he was not pleased. 'Laugh?' he inquired

reproachfully—'laugh? But is it not belittling God to suppose that He could *laugh* at poor creatures like ourselves? Should we consider it dignified to laugh at the blind wriggings of a poor earthworm, whether we knew it to be happy or miserable?'

On another occasion, a certain lady visitor happened to express her disapproval of the principle of self-sacrifice, and maintained that where it achieved no lasting good it should be discouraged. As an instance of what she meant, she described a certain family of her acquaintance, in whose household a particularly undesirable form of self-sacrifice was constantly exhibited. The mother, it appeared, was a bed-ridden old lady, who had as her permanent attendant and companion her youngest daughter, a young woman of marriageable age, and both healthy and attractive. Now, argued Rodin's lady friend, who evidently held decidedly utilitarian views, surely it was to be deplored that there was no legislation, or public tradition, which could prevent a young and useful life from wearing itself away in such unproductive and depressing toil, however sublimely unselfish that toil might be. By the time the grave released the mother from her life of pain, her devoted daughter, broken and debilitated by her life of sacrifice, must stand alone as the mere waste product of the whole of the unhappy arrangement.

Rodin listened attentively, as was his wont; and, when asked for his own views on the question, replied as follows: 'Certainly, I agree with you, Mademoiselle, that the loss to the world of such a young and beautiful life is very lamentable. I think, as you do, that it is not a pleasant sight to watch a youthful and desirable creature wearing herself away in a gloomy sick-room. But have you thought of the alternative? That is what we have to consider. Is it not a thousand times better that one person, like the young woman you speak of, should be broken and debilitated by a life of self-sacrifice, than that the principle for which she strove—the principle of filial piety—should vanish from this cruel world and leave suffering humanity very much poorer than it is at present?'

It has been said that a true genius is always a multiple or universal genius—that is to say, that although the exigencies of his early life may have forced him to adopt, and become proficient, in the technique of a particular art or science, there are latent in him the qualities and powers which would have made him distinguished in any calling. Certainly this was true of Rodin, than whom nobody could have shown greater versatility or more com-

plete catholicity of taste and sympathies. He painted with extreme vigour and frankness. Indeed, some of the landscapes that I found lying about in odd corners at the Villa des Brillants struck me as being so beautiful, that I persuaded him to have them framed and preserved—an idea that apparently had not occurred to him before I suggested it; and although I do not know what has happened to these *barbouillages*, as he modestly called them, if they still exist they probably occupy the very same frames that I selected for them. I have already mentioned his literary tastes, which were pronounced, and I have shown too that he was a good and forcible speaker. In music, moreover, he also had the most cultivated and fastidious taste, and counted many friends among the prominent musicians of his day. True, his views on this subject were a trifle old-fashioned, and he preferred to hear his friend and biographer, Mlle Cladel, play Palestrina or Mozart to him on the valuable old spinet that stood in the studio at Meudon, rather than listen to the best modern professionals playing modern music; but he always discussed music with very profound understanding, and held strong views upon the use of music in education. Indeed, it was largely his love of music that caused him sometimes to speak, if not bitterly, at least unflatteringly about his great contemporary McNeill Whistler; for if the latter complained of Rodin's work as not being 'statuesque,' and thought that the great sculptor was inclined occasionally to be a little obscene, Rodin could hardly control himself when speaking about Whistler's 'eternal gramophone.'

Personally, I was always convinced that there was not much love lost between the two men; but I should not go so far as to suggest that Whistler started his gramophone purposely to annoy Rodin, whenever the latter visited him, although this is rather what Rodin suspected. It is far more likely that, as the two men had but little in common, the bright and resourceful American had recourse to the gramophone whenever Rodin appeared as a means of relieving the tenseness of a situation which, otherwise, would probably have proved intolerable to both of them. At all events, Rodin never allowed his annoyance at Whistler's peculiar taste in music to override his better judgment in his appreciation of Whistler's art; for I used to hear him again and again extolling Whistler's *beau dessin* to people who deliberately questioned him on the matter; and this opinion he expressed just as sincerely as he stigmatised his friend Renoir's drawing as atrocious.

Behind Rodin's horror of the gramophone, however, there was something deeper than the mere prejudice of a cultivated musician, and that was his instinctive loathing of everything that typified the alleged 'Progress' of Western civilisation. He constantly expressed his delight at the thought that he might not live long enough to witness the complete development of the aeroplane, and, whenever one of these aerial machines hovered above the Villa des Brillants, as they frequently did, owing to the close vicinity of the Versailles aerodrome, the sight of it always depressed him. 'Our last remaining peaceful view,' he used to exclaim, 'will vanish with these aerial monsters!' He also hated the automobile and all its concomitant evils. Quite apart from its interference with peaceful pedestrianism in rural districts, which he deplored, he made this remarkable prophecy concerning it—a prophecy which it is not impossible we are feeling the truth of in England to-day—namely, that the oil and smells emitted everywhere by the motor-car, would ultimately be sure to modify insect life in Europe, and probably kill the bee industry, by terrifying the bees—those artists in scent—into complete inaction. Although he was sufficiently well off to keep a car, he resolutely refused to buy one, and was content to drive along the local country lanes, and about the Bois de Meudon, in his own victoria, drawn by a quiet old horse, which in its off hours could pose for him as steadily as an antique sculpture, and driven by an ancient veteran of the box, whose daily work rarely occupied more than two and a half hours.

'The idea of Progress is Society's worst form of cant!' he used to say. 'We undoubtedly see advancement, but it is all in one direction, and science from being a shy and derided harbinger of greater happiness, has become an overweening tyrant that bewilders and masters us. How pleased everybody is with the feats of our engineers! Machines, by doing man's work, were going to save time; and indeed, we have ever so much more time on our hands now than we had formerly! Machinery was going to be man's mute slave. But is the stoker who sweats and drinks his life away in the suffocating stoke-hole of a transatlantic liner the lord of the machinery about him?'

Sometimes his views would recall Cobbett, Ruskin, William Morris, or Samuel Butler, more particularly when he spoke of the influence of machinery upon the masses of all modern industrial communities. 'Formerly,' he would say, 'part of the workman's

natural reward for the work he did was an access of intelligence, skill and ability, and a corresponding increase in self-confidence. The cobbler who gradually learnt to mould leather round a foot with ever multiplied skill became a master in his special branch of industry; and, what was more, could transmit his acquired virtuosity to his offspring. This was the divine guerdon of his work, provided, of course, that it entailed a fair amount of mental and physical effort, and conduced to a higher degree of active co-ordination of muscle and brain. But whither has this co-ordination of muscle and brain gone to-day? In modern industry, and in most forms of modern locomotion, the workman, in a large number of cases, does little more than move a lever from left to right—the machine does the rest. The machines working in France at the present moment must be legion; but what has become of the divine guerdon for the labourer's work? Machines cannot develop intelligence. They certainly accomplish what is needed; but who acquires greater expertness from their labours, whose muscles and brains learn ever more subtle and intricate co-ordination from their production? Time is outwitted; money is accumulated; but someone has to pay heavily for these triumphs, and it is the working classes who are paying—with their brains. The very highest boast of Progress, therefore—mechanical perfection—is preparing the road back to barbarism! We sneer at Socialism; but, with all its glaring absurdities, it is taking an ever stronger hold upon the minds of the people. Why is this? Obviously because, to the modern working-man who turns a lever from left to right and back again all his life, Socialism sounds the most Godlike wisdom, it is the very quintessence of sound and mature political thought and theory.'

But let it not be supposed that Rodin's lack of sympathy with many of the tendencies of his Age led him to hold himself aloof from his contemporaries, or to entertain uncharitable notions concerning his race. On the contrary, his sociability and good feeling were notorious; nor was his general judgment of his fellows a particularly harsh one. To Carlyle's famous stricture regarding the proportion of fools among the population of the British Isles, Rodin replied as follows: 'Unjustly compared with hypothetical angels of omniscience, men are perhaps both foolish and vain, but placed side by side with the other creatures of the higher animal world, among whom they rank but as a remote superior family branch, men are marvellously, divinely intelligent.'

Only very occasionally did this highly gifted artist express contempt for the stupidity of his less fortunate brethren, and that was when, acting as a crowd, they caused their opinion to prevail concerning matters which they were hardly equipped to judge. Then his own early experiences, and the fate of Pheidias at the hands of the envious and rapacious Athenians, would occur to his mind, and raising his hand in horror to his eyes, as if to shut out the image of the world's vulgarity, he would ejaculate '*Que le monde est bête!*'

During the time that I was with him, he certainly seemed to enjoy extraordinarily good health, and I never knew him to consult a doctor. True, he had not much faith in orthodox medicine, and on the few occasions when he was slightly indisposed, either owing to a cold or a migraine, he was much more inclined to have recourse to what he called *les remèdes de bonnes femmes*, than to call for professional medical assistance. Madame Rodin, who, like most Frenchwomen of the old school, had inherited that knowledge of homely remedies which used to be handed down from mother to daughter throughout the length and breadth of France, was thoroughly acquainted with these 'old-wives' remedies, most of which she would obtain from the local *herboriste*; and infusions of *bourrache*, *tilleul*, *queues de cerises*, or *camomille*, always seemed sufficient to restore Rodin's health, whenever he required special treatment of any kind.

I had, of course, ample opportunities of observing the relationship that existed between the great sculptor and the woman who was his closest companion during practically the whole of his adult life, and I have no hesitation in saying that it was an exceedingly happy one. Naturally, however, it had to be viewed from the proper standpoint, and due allowance made for the great disparity in cultivation and intellectual power between the two people. Regarded from the angle of a modern match between equals, and with all the bias that modern feminism has fostered in favour of woman's so-called freedom, independence, or what-not, it might very easily have struck one or two of our latter-day young women with horror. But this would have amounted to judging it according to a totally wrong standard, and one, moreover, to which both Rodin himself and Madame Rodin would have scorned to aspire. Madame Rodin who, very soon after my first appearance at the Villa des Brillants, paid me the honour of confiding in me concerning most of her difficulties and anxieties, hardly ever complained

either about her mode of life or about the treatment she received at the hands of her lord and master ; and her devotion seemed to set no limit to the services she cheerfully performed for him. Occasionally she might perhaps come to me, lamenting over the many harassing engagements and activities that sometimes conspired to ruffle Rodin's temper ; or she might in a rare mood of revolt comment bitterly upon his thoughtlessness in asking her to put on his boots directly after luncheon, instead of before the meal, as the effort of bending over his feet and buttoning his boots, so soon after eating, disturbed her digestion. But never did I hear anything more serious than this, and even complaints of this kind were rare. She was an ingenuous and primitive creature, scarcely able to realise the exalted position her distinguished mate had conquered for himself among the artistic and cultured communities of the whole world ; and perhaps always grieving a little secretly over the altered circumstances of the poor struggling sculptor who, having emerged from that obscurity which had once made him completely her possession, had become a public figure and institution, in whose active relations to the world outside she could not participate.

I shall never forget the incident that first brought her confiding helplessness vividly before me. It happened shortly after I had entered Rodin's employ. I was sitting in the little study adjoining the dining-room one afternoon, dealing with the correspondence for the day, when Madame Rodin entered, and in tones of great timidity asked whether I could possibly find time to write a letter for her. Realising instantly that, however much I might feel disposed, on other grounds, to oblige the old lady, my very position as private secretary to Rodin must necessarily involve the duty of transacting Madame Rodin's business as well, I eagerly acquiesced, and, pushing aside my other work, begged her to explain what it was she wished me to do. She then began to dictate to me a long letter to a near relative of her own, in which she entered into so many details of an intimate and private nature that I could not help wondering, as I wrote, whether Rodin would be likely to approve of my becoming apprised in this adventitious fashion of matters which were obviously not my business. It was impossible to write like a machine, without any intelligent concern about what I was writing ; it was therefore quite out of the question that I should retain no knowledge of what was being dictated to me. Before three pages had been covered, therefore, I thought it

only proper to interrupt Madame Rodin, and to ask her whether M. Rodin might not possibly disapprove of my hearing in that haphazard way all the details that she was unfolding in the letter. She frowned, and her eyes glared, very much as they glare in the 'Bellona,' for which she originally posed. 'But most certainly not!' she exclaimed. 'M. Rodin will not mind. He knows perfectly well that I cannot write!'

Nevertheless, whether Madame Rodin was as illiterate as she maintained or not, she was certainly indispensable to the great man with whom her lot in life was cast; and, in addition to securing him his creature comforts, she performed a hundred services for him with which none but a devoted and reliable disciple could have been entrusted. Foremost among her more responsible activities, for instance, was that of keeping Rodin's clay moist and workable, particularly when he happened to be engaged upon an important bust, for which the sittings were limited. Then, as Rodin often assured me, there was no one whom he preferred to Madame Rodin for this delicate responsibility. She certainly knew how to swathe those priceless models in their moist linen cloths, with all the care of a loving mother, and when she was engaged on this work she really felt herself to be an essential factor in the great sculptor's productive energy.

This, as a rule, was the final task of the day, and whilst Madame Rodin in one corner of the studio was busy accomplishing it, Rodin and I, if it were dark enough, would wander off to another part, in order to examine by candle-light either an antique sculpture recently purchased, or a piece of his own work in course of completion. This examination by the light of a candle, which was an elaborate operation, constituted an important part of Rodin's technique, and it is worth describing. Candle in hand, I would walk very slowly round the piece of sculpture to be examined—say at the rate of a step every ten seconds—and Rodin about a yard and a half behind me, so that straight lines drawn from our respective positions to the sculpture would form approximately a right angle, would follow me round at the same pace. Keeping his eyes fixed upon the sculpture the whole time, and taking the most careful note of what he called *les profiles*—that is to say the various contours of the sculpture in different positions, forced into sharp definition by the light of the single flame I bore—it was thus that he formed an accurate judgment of the planes of the various pieces that he had acquired, or was actually producing.

And, according to the success with which a particular piece of sculpture survived this searching scrutiny, it was pronounced either *très beau*, *beau*, or merely *médiocre*. If, however, the beauty of the workmanship were such as to call for an unusual expression of approval, then Rodin, addressing himself alone, and hardly heeding Madame Rodin or myself, would exclaim in accents of the most solemn admiration: '*Cette chair est toute chaude!*'

Rodin was sixty-six years of age when I joined him, and yet his enthusiasm at the sight of beauty in any form was still as fresh and vigorous as that of a youth at his first initiation. Indeed, I was frequently bewildered by the intensity and apparent immaturity of his outbursts, whenever he was confronted with anything that stirred his artist's soul; and these exhibitions of childlike rapture continued to baffle me, until I realised that it was precisely this capacity to feel as acutely as he did, and to respond freshly and powerfully, in spite of advancing years, to the beauty and harmony of life and art, which constitutes the principal difference between the truly artistic temperament and the temper more slow to move of the ordinary man.

PHILOSOPHIC ANTS.

BY JULIAN HUXLEY.

ACCORDING to a recent study by Mr. Shapley,¹ the normal rate of progression of ants—or at least of the species of ant which he studied—is a function of temperature. For each rise of ten degrees centigrade the ants go about double as fast. So complete is the dependence that the ants may be employed as a thermometer, measurement of their rate of locomotion giving the temperature to within one degree centigrade.

The simple consequence—easy of apprehension by us, but infinite puzzlement to ants—is that on a warm day an ant will get through a task four or five times as heavy as she will on a cold one. She does more, thinks more, lives more : more Bergsonian duration is hers.

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There was a time, we learn in the myrmecine annals, when ants were simple unsophisticated folk, barely emerged from entomological barbarism. Some stayed at home to look after the young brood and tend the houses, others went afield to forage. It was not long before they discovered that the days differed in length. At one season of the year they found the days insufferably long; they must rest five or six times if they were, by continuing work while light lasted, to satisfy their fabulous instinct for toil. At the opposite season they needed no rest at all, for they only carried through a fifth of the work. This irregularity vexed them : and what is more, time varied from day to day, and this hindered them in the accurate execution of any plans.

But as the foragers talked with the household servants, and with those of their own number who through illness or accident were forced to stay indoors, they discovered that the home-stayers noticed a much slighter difference in time between the seasons.

It is easy for us to see this as due to the simple fact that the temperature of the nest varies less, summer and winter, than does that of the outer air : but it was a hard nut for them, and there was

¹ *Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci., Philadelphia*, Vol. vi. p. 204.

much head-scratching. It was of course made extremely difficult by the fact that they were not sensitive to gradual changes in temperature as such, the change being as it were taken up in the altered rate of living. But as their processes of thought kept pace in alteration with their movements, they found it simplest and most natural to believe in the fixity and uniformity of their own life and its processes, and to refer all changes to the already obvious mutability of external nature.

The Wise Ants were summoned: they were ordered by the Queen to investigate the matter; and so, after consultation, decided to apply the test of experiment. Several of their number, at stated intervals throughout the year, stayed in and went out on alternate days, performing identical tasks on the two occasions. The task was the repeated recitation of the most efficacious of the myrmecine sacred formulae.

The rough-and-ready calculations of the workers were speedily corroborated. 'Great is God, and we are the people of God' could be recited out-of-doors some twenty thousand times a day in summer, less than four thousand times in winter; while the corresponding indoor figures were about fifteen and six thousand.

There was the fact: now for the explanation. After many conclaves, a most ingenious hypothesis was put forward, which found universal credence. Let me give it an elegant and logical form.

- (1) It was well known—indeed self-evident—that the Ant race was the offspring and special care of the Power who made and ruled the universe.
- (1.1) Therefore a great deal of the virtue and essence of that Power inhered in the race of Ants. Ants, indeed, were made in the image of God.
- (1.2) It was, alas, common knowledge that this Power, although Omnipotent and Omniscient, was confronted by another power, the power of disorder, of irregularity, who prevented tasks, put temptations in the way of workers, and was in fact the genius of Evil.
- (2) Further, it was a received tradition among them that there had been a fall from the grace of a Golden Age, when there were no neuters, but all enjoyed married bliss; and the ant-cows gave milk and honey from their teats.

- (2.1) And that this was forfeited by a crime (unmentionable, I regret to say, in modern society) on the part of a certain Queen of Ants in the distant past. The Golden Age was gone; the poor neuters—obligate spinsters—were brought into being; work became the order of the day. Ant-lions with flaming jaws were set round that kingdom of the Golden Age, from which all ants were thenceforth expelled.
- (2.2.1) This being so, it was natural to conclude that the fall from grace involved a certain loss of divine qualities.
- (2.2.2) The general conclusion to be drawn was that in the race of ants there still resided a certain quantity of these virtues that give regularity to things and events; although not sufficient wholly to counterbalance the machinations of the power of evil and disorder.
- (2.2.3) That where a number of ants had their home and were congregated together, there the virtue resided in larger bulk and with greater effect, but that abroad, where ants were scattered and away from hearth, home, and altar, the demon of irregularity exerted greater sway.
- This doctrine held the field for centuries.

But at last a Philosopher arose. He was not satisfied with the current explanation, although this had been held for so long that it had acquired the odour and force of a religious dogma. He decided to put the matter to the test. He took a pupa (*anglice* 'ant's egg') and on a windless day suspended it from a twig outside the nest. There he had it swung back and forth, counting its swings. He then (having previously obtained permission from the Royal Sacerdotal College) suspended the pupa by the same length of thread from the roof of the largest chamber of the nest—a dome devoted to spiritual exercises—and repeated the swinging and the counting. The living pendulum-bob achieved the same daily number of oscillations inside the nest as outside, although it was full summer, and the foragers found the day quite twice as long as did the home-stayers. The trial was repeated with another pupa and other lengths of thread; the result was always the same.

It was then that he laid the foundations of ant science by his bold pronouncement that neither the combat of spiritual powers

nor the expansion or contraction of the store of divine grace had anything to do with the strange alteration of diurnal length ; but that the cause of it lay in the Ants themselves, who varied with the varying of something for which he invented the word *Temperature*, not in a contraction or expansion of Time.

This he announced in public, thinking that a tested truth must be well received, and would of necessity some day prove useful to society. But the consequence was a storm of protest, horror, and execration.

Did this impious creature think to overthrow the holy traditions with impunity ? Did he not realise that to impugn one sentence, one word, one letter of the Sacred Books was to subvert the whole ? Did he think that a coarse, simple, verifiable experiment was to weigh against the eternal verity of subtle and mysterious Revelation ? No ! and again a thousand times No ! !

He was brought before the Wise Ants, and cross-questioned by them. It was finally decided that he was to abjure his heretical opinion and to recant in public, reciting aloud to the four winds of heaven : ' the Ant is the norm of all '—

Μύρμηξ παντὸς νόμος.

He said it. But Truth stirred within him, and under his breath he muttered ' Eppur si muove . . . ' This was overheard, and he was condemned (loneliness being much hated and dreaded by ants) to a solitary banishment.

Later philosophers, however, by using this same pendulum method, were enabled to find that the movements of sap in plants differed in rate according to the length of day, and later, discovered that the expansion of water in hollow stems also followed these changes. By devising machines for registering these movements, they were enabled to prophesy with considerable success the amount of work to be got through on a given day, and so to render great aid to the smooth working of the body politic. Thus, gradually, the old ideas fell into desuetude among the educated classes—which, however, did not prevent the common people from remaining less than half-convinced and from regarding the men of science with suspicion and disapproval.

We happen to be warm-blooded—to have had the particular problem faced by our philosophic ants solved for us during the

passage of evolutionary time, not by any taking of thought on our part or on the part of our ancestors, but by the casual processes of variation and natural selection. But a succession of similar problems presses upon us. Relativity is in the air; it is so much in the air that it becomes almost stifling at times; but even so, its sphere so far has been the inorganic sciences, and biological relativity, though equally important, has been little mentioned.

We have all heard the American definition of life as 'one dam thing after another': it would perhaps be more accurate to substitute some term such as *relatedness* for *thing*.

When I was a small boy, my mother wrote down in a little book a number of my infant doings and childish sayings, the perusal of which I find an admirable corrective to any excessive moral or intellectual conceit. What, for instance, is to be thought of a scientist of whom the following incident is recorded, even if the record refers to the age of four years?

I (for convenience one must assign the same identity to oneself at different ages, although again it is but a relative sameness that persists)—I had made some particularly outrageous statement which was easily proved false: to which proof, apparently without compunction, I answered 'Oh well, I always *exagg-erate* when it's a fine day. . . .'

The converse of this I came across recently in a solemn treatise of psychology: a small girl of five or six, in the course of an 'essay' in school, affirmed that the sun was shining and the day was fine; while as a matter of fact it had been continuously overcast and gloomy: on being pressed for a reason, she explained that she felt so happy that particular morning that she had been sure it was a fine day.

If the weather can affect one's statements of fact, and one's emotions can affect the apparent course of meteorological events, where is the line to be drawn? What is real? The only things of which we have immediate cognizance are, of course, happenings in our minds: and the precise nature and quality of each of these happenings depends on two things—on the constitution and state of our mind and its brain on the one hand; on the other hand upon events or relations between events outside that system. That sounds very grand; but all it means after all is that you need a cause to produce an effect, a machine to register as well as a something to be registered.

As further consequence, since this particular machine (if I may be permitted to use the odious word in a purely metaphorical sense), this mind of ours, is never the same for two succeeding instants, but continually varies both in the quantity of its activity and the quality of its state, it follows that variations in mental happenings depend very largely on variations in the machine that registers, not by any means solely upon variations in what is to be registered.

Few (at least among Englishmen) would dispute the thesis that food, properly cooked and served, and of course adapted to the hour, is attractive four times in the day. But to a large proportion among us, even sausages and marmalade at nine, or roast beef and potatoes on a Sabbath noon, would prove not only not attractive but positively repellent if offered us on a small steamer on a rough day. I will not labour the point.

We all know how the size of sums of money appears to vary in a remarkable way according as they are being paid in or paid out. We all know to our cost the extraordinary superiority of the epochs when our more elderly relatives were youthful. The fact remains that we are always prone to regard the registering machine as a constant, and to believe that all the variation comes from outside. It is easy to discount the inner variation in ourselves when we are seasick, or in others when they are old and reminiscent, but not only is this discounting sometimes far more difficult, it is sometimes not even attempted.

What, for instance, are we to say to those who profess to find a harmony in the universe, those to whom poverty and discomfort and hard work appear the merest accidents, to whom even disease, pain, loss, death, and disaster are 'somehow good'? You and I would probably retort that we have a rooted dislike to discomfort, that we should most strongly deny that the loss of a friend or even of a leg was anything but bad, that a toothache was not damnably unpleasant. But I think that if they were philosophically inclined (which they probably would not be), they might justifiably retort that the difference between their universe and ours was due to a difference in their mental machinery, which they had succeeded in adjusting so that it registered in a different and a better way.

It is at least clear that something of the sort can happen in the intellectual sphere. To the uneducated, the totality of things, if ever reflected upon, is a compound of fog and chaos: advance

is painfully slow, and interlarded with unpleasant falls into pits and holes of illogicality and inconsequence; to those who have taken the trouble to push on, however, an orderly system at last reveals itself.

The problem of the origin and relationship of species gave such mental distress to those zoologists of the first half of the nineteenth century who were conscientious enough to struggle with it, that many of them ended by a mental suppression of the problem and a refusal to discuss it further. The publication of Darwin's 'Origin of Species' was to them what psychoanalysis is (or may be) to a patient with a repressed complex. Or again, no one can read accounts of the physicists' recent work on the structure of the atom without experiencing an extraordinary feeling of satisfaction. Instead of wallowing in unrelated facts, we fly on wings of principle; not only can we better cut our way through the jungle of things, but we are allowed a privilege that has universally been considered one of the attributes of Gods—the calm and untroubled understanding of things and processes.

‘The Gods are happy.
They turn on all sides
Their shining eyes,
And see below them
The earth and men.’

This being so, what is to prevent us from believing that, once certain adjustments are made in the mental sausage-machine, we shall discover that what we once found impossibly tough meat will pass smoothly through and become done up into the most satisfactory of sausages? In other words, that the values are there if we choose to make them—an Euckenish doctrine which, for all that it arouses instinctive suspicion, may none the less be true.

But even when we have made all possible discounts of this kind, evolved the smoothest-running machinery, converted the raw and meaty material of being into every conceivable kind of tidy sausage, the fact remains that there are feats beyond the power of our machine—beyond its power because of the very quality of its being.

We live at a certain rhythm in time, at a certain level of size and space; beyond certain limits, events in the outer world are not directly appreciable by the ordinary channels of sense,

although a symbolic picture of them may be presented to us by the intellect.

When we are listening to the organ, sometimes there come notes which are on the border-line between sound and feeling: their separate vibrations are distinguishable and pulse through us, and the more the vibrations are separable the more they are felt as mechanical shocks, the less as sound. However, we know perfectly well that all sounds as a matter of fact depend on vibratory disturbance, and that it is only some peculiarity of the registering machinery, in ear or brain, which enables us to hear a note as continuous.

Still more remarkable are the facts of vision. As I write I see the tulips in my garden, red against the green grass: the red is a continuous sensation; but the physicists appear to be justified in telling us that the eye is being bombarded every second with a series of waves, not the few hundred or thousand that give us sound, but the half-billion or so which conspire to illuminate our vision.

With sound, we alter the frequency of the waves and we get a difference of tone which seems to be merely a difference of more or less: but alter the frequency of light-waves, and the whole quality of the sensation changes, as when I look from the tulips to the sky. The change of registering mechanism is here more profound than the change in outer event.

Or again, to choose an example that depends more on size than rhythm, how very difficult it is to remember that the pressure of air on our bodies is not the uniform gentle embrace of some homogeneous substance, but the bombardment of an infinity of particles. The particles are not even all alike: some are of oxygen, others of nitrogen, of carbonic acid gas, of water vapour. They are not all travelling at uniform speeds; collisions are all the time occurring, and the molecules are continuously changing their rate of travel as they clash and bump.

We have only to look down a microscope to convince ourselves of the alteration in our experience that it would mean if we were to become sufficiently diminished. The tiniest solid particles in fluids can be seen to be in a continuous state of agitation—inexplicable until it was pointed out that this mysterious 'Brownian' movement was the inevitable result of impacts by the faster-moving molecules of the fluid. Many living things that we can still see are small enough to live permanently in such agitation;

the longest diameter of many bacteria is but half a micron—a two-thousandth of a millimetre—and there are many ultra-microscopic organisms which, owing to their closer approximation to molecular dimensions, must pass their lives in erratic excursions many times more violent than any visible Brownian motion.

If we could shrink, like Alice, at the persuasion of some magic mushroom, the rain of particles on our skin, now as unfelt as midges by a rhinoceros, would at last begin to be perceptible. We should find ourselves surrounded by an infinity of motes; titillated by a dance of sand-grains; bruised by a rain of marbles; pounded by flights of fives-balls. What is more, the smaller we became, the more individuality and apparent free-will should we detect in the surrounding particles. As we got still smaller, we should, now and again, find the nearly uniform bombardment replaced by a concerted attack on one side or the other, and we should be hurled for perhaps double our own length in one direction. If we could conceivably enter into a single inorganic molecule, we should find ourselves one of a moving host of similar objects: and we should further perceive that these objects were themselves complex, some like double stars, others star-clusters, others single suns, and all again built of lesser units held in a definite plan, in an architecture reminding us (if we still had memory) of a solar system *in petto*. If we were lucky enough to be in a complicated fluid like sea-water, we should be intrigued by the relations of the different kinds of particles. They would be continually coming up to other particles of different kinds, and would then sometimes enter into intimate union with them. If we could manage to follow their history, we should find that after a time they would separate, and seek new partners, of the same or of different species. Some kinds of the units, or people as we should be inclined to call them, would spend most of their existence in the married state, others would apparently prefer to remain single, or, if they married, would within no long time obtain divorce.

We should be forcibly reminded of life in some cosmopolitan city like London or New York. If there existed a registrar to note down the events of these little beings' existence, and we were privileged to inspect the register, we should find that each had its own history, different from that of every other in its course and its matrimonial adventures.

If we were near the surface we should find that the outer beings always arranged themselves in a special and coherent layer, apparently to protect themselves against the machinations of the different beings inhabiting the region beyond; for every now and again one would seem to be pulled from the water and be lost among the more scattered inhabitants of the air.

If we could now revert to our old size, we might remember, as we listened to the scientist enunciating the simple formulae of the gas-laws, or giving numerical expression to vapour-pressures and solubilities, that this simplicity and order which he enabled us to find in inorganic nature was only simplicity when viewed on a large enough scale, and that it was needful to deal in millions and billions before chance aberrations faded into insignificance, needful to experience molecules from the standpoint of a unit almost infinitely bigger before individual behaviour could be neglected and merged in the orderly average. And we might be tempted to wonder how the personal idiosyncrasies of our human units might appear to a being as much larger than we as we are larger than a molecule—whether kings and beggars would not fare alike, and all the separate, striving, feeling, conflicting personalities, with their individual histories, their ancestors, successes, marriages, friendships, pains, and pleasures, be merged in some homogeneous and simple effect, altering in response to circumstances, with changes capable of expression in some formula as simple as Boyle's or Avogadro's Law.

Almost more startling might be the effect of altering the rhythm at which we live, or rather at which we experience events.

If only I were Mr. H. G. Wells, I could make a mint of money by a story based on this idea of rhythm of living.¹ Let us see . . . First there would be Mercaptan the distinguished inventor, who would lead me (lay, uninstructed, Watsonish me, after the fashion of narrators) into his laboratory. There on the table would be the machine—all but complete: handles, coils of wire, quartz terminals, gauges of rock-crystal in which oscillated coloured fluids, platinum cogwheels . . . dot . . . dot . . . dot . . . dot . . .

¹ The reading of this paper at a Cambridge club brought a string of informants eager to let me know that Mr. Wells had already written a story on this theme. I was grateful to them for having caused me to read the *New Accelerator*, which by some strange chance I had managed to miss: but Mr. Wells's treatment is so wholly different from that which I have sketched that I feel no scruples in letting it stand; and, if amends are needed, at least I make him a present of the germ of a new tale, and so feel that honour should be satisfied.

He hardly dared to make the final connexions, all clear and calculable though they were. He had put so much of himself into it: so many hopes . . . fears . . . dots

Then there would be the farewell dinner-party—first the inventor's voice on the wireless telephone, summoning Wagrom the explorer, Glosch of the *Evening Post*, Stewartson Ampill the novelist, and the rest of our old friends: then the warm friendly light of the candles, the excellent port, the absence of women, the reminiscences, the asterisks, the

Mercaptan refuses to allow the rest to come into the laboratory, in case something should go wrong. He straps the machine on his shoulders, makes a final connexion; his life processes begin to work faster, faster, ever faster. The first effect of course was a change of colour. The blue oblong of the window became green—yellow—orange—red. Meanwhile each wave-length of the ultra-violet became blue, and itself ran down the gamut of colour. Then came the turn of the X-rays—by their dim light he groped about, till they too became relatively too slow for his retina. That ought to make him blind, of course—but no! Mr. Wells had thought that all out; and he came into a state of nearly maximum speed where he perceived a brilliant, phosphorescent light given out by all objects, generated by disturbances of a wave-length unimaginably, undiscoverably small. Meanwhile he had passed through an amazing experience—he had heard the veritable music of the spheres! That had happened when in his acceleration he had, so to speak, caught up with the light-waves, until they were tuned to his ear's organ of Corti: and all that had been visible in his ordinary life was now to be appreciated by hearing. Unfortunately, as his ears possessed no lens, this universal music was to him of course merely a hideous babel of sound.

At last, as the workings of his body approached the rapidity of light's own oscillations, he entered on a new phase—surrounded on every side by an ocean of waves which lapped softly against his body—waves, waves, and still more waves. . . .

He was in that region not unlike that from which life has escaped when it ceased to be infinitely little, a region in which none of the events that make up our ordinary life, none of the bodies that are our normal environment, have existence any more—all reduced to a chaos of billows ceaselessly and meaninglessly buffeting his being.

'Mi ritrovai in una selva oscura.'

Life is a wood, dark and trackless enough to be sure ; but Mercaptan could not even see that it was a wood—for the trees.

Yet it was soothing : the very meaninglessness of the wave-rocking released one of responsibility, and it was delicious to float upon this strange etheric sea.

Then his scientific mind reasserted itself. He realised that he had magnified his rate of life and was consuming his precious days at an appalling speed. The lever was thrown into reverse, and he passed gradually back to what he had been accustomed to think of as reality.

Back to it ; and then beyond it, showing his vital rhythm. This time he was able by an ingenious arrangement to eliminate much of the disturbing effect of his rhythm-change on his vision. It was an idea of which he was very proud : every alternate light-wave was cut out when he doubled the capacity of each process of life, and so on in automatic correspondence. As a result he was enabled to get a picture of the outer world very similar to that obtained in the ordinary accelerations of slow processes that are made possible by running slow-taken cinema records at high speed. He saw the snowdrops lift their matutinal heads and drop them again at evening—an instant later ; the spring was an alarming burst of living energy, the trees' budding and growth of leaves became a portent, like the bristling of hairs on the backs of vegetable cats. As his rate changed and he comprehended more and more in each pulse, the flowers faded and fell before he could think of plucking them, autumnal apples rotted in his grasp, day was a flash and night a wink of the eye, the two blending at last in a continuous half-light.

After a time ordinary objects ceased to be distinguishable ; then the seasons shared the fate of day and night. The lever was now nearly hard over, and the machine was reaching its limit. He was covering nearly a thousand of men's years with each of his own seconds.

The cinema effect was almost useless to him now ; and he discarded this apparatus. Now followed what he had so eagerly awaited, something deducible in general but unpredictable in all particulars. As the repeated separate impacts of the ether waves had condensed, at his old ordinary rate, to form the continuous sensation of light, so now the events of nature coalesced to give new objects, new kinds of sensation. Especially was this so with life : the repeated generations seemed to act like separate repeated

waves of light, blending to give a picture of the species changing and evolving before his eyes.

Other experiences he could explain less well. He was conscious of strange sensations that he thought were probably associated with changes in energy-distribution, in entropy; others which he seemed to perceive directly, by some form of telepathy, concerning the type of mental process occurring around him. It was all strange: but of one thing he was sure—that if only he could find a way of nourishing and maintaining himself in this new state, he would be able, as a child does in the first few years of life, to correlate his puzzling new sensations, and that when he had done this he would obtain a different and more direct view of reality than any he had ever obtained or thought of obtaining before.

As the individual light-waves were summed to give light, as the microcosm of gas-molecules cancelled out to give a uniformity of pressure, so now the repetition of the years coalesced into what could be described as visible time, a sensation of cosmic rate; the repeated pullulations of living things fused into something perceived as organic achievement: and the infinite variety of organisms, their conflicts and interactions, resolved itself, through the mediation of his sense-organs and brain at their new rhythm, into a direct perception of life as a whole, an entity with a pressure on its environment, a single slowly-evolving form, a motion and direction.

He put the lever to its limit: the rhythm of the cosmos altered again in relation to his own. He had an extraordinary sense of being on the verge of a revelation. The universe—that was the same; but what he experienced of it was totally different. He had immediate experience of the waxing and waning of suns, of the condensation of nebulae, the slowing down and speeding up of evolutionary processes.

The curious, apparently telepathic sense which he had had of the mental side of existence was intensified. Through it, the world began to be perceived as a single Being, with all its parts in interaction. The shadowy lineaments of this being were half seen by his mental vision—vast, colossal, slowly changing; but they appeared only to disappear again, like a picture in the fire.

Strive as he might, he could not see its real likeness. Now it appeared benign; at its next dim reappearance there would

be a feeling of capricious irresponsibility about it: at another instant it was cold, remote; once or twice terrible, impending over and filling everything with a black demoniacal power which brought only horror with it.

If he could but accelerate the machine! He wanted to *know*—to know whether this phantom was a reality, to know above all if it were a thing of evil or of good: and he could not know unless he could advance that last final step necessary to fuse the rhythm of separate events into the sensation of the single whole.

He sat straining all his faculties: the machine whirred and rocked: but in vain. And at last, feeling desperately hungry, for he had forgotten to take food with him, he gradually brought back the lever to its neutral-point.

Of course, Mr. Wells would have done it much better than this. And then there would have to be an ending. I think the newspaper man would take his opportunity to slink off into the laboratory and get on the machine with the idea of making a scoop for his paper; . . . and then he would put the lever in too violently, and be thrown backwards. His head hit the corner of a bench, and he remained stunned; but by evil chance, the handles of the machine still made connexion with his body after the fall. The machine was making him adjust his rhythm to that of light; so that he was living at an appalling rate. He had gone into the laboratory late at night. Next morning they found him—dead: and dead of senile decay—grey-haired, shrivelled, atrophic.

Then of course the machine is smashed up; and Mr. Wells begins to write another book.

I have spent so much time in frivolous discussion of rhythm and size and commonplaces that I have not pointed out another fundamental fact of biological relativity—to wit, that we are but parochial creatures, endowed only with sense-organs giving information about the agencies normally found in our own little environment. Mind without the objects of mind is the very chimaera bombinating *in vacuo*.

Out of all the ether waves we are sensitive to an octave as light, and some few others as heat. X-rays and ultra-violet destroy us, but we know nothing about them until they begin to give us

pain ; while the low swell of Hertzian waves passes by and through us harmless and unheeded. Electrical sense again we have none.

Imagine what it would be for inhabitants of another planet where changes in Hertzian waves were the central, pivotal changes in environment, where accordingly life had become sensitive to ' wireless ' and to nought else save perhaps touch—imagine such beings broadcast upon the face of the Earth. With a little practice and ingenuity they would no doubt be able to decipher the messages floating through our atmosphere, would feel the rhythms of the Black Hamitic Band transmitting Jazz to a million homes, and be able to follow, night by night, the soporific but benevolent fairy-stories of Uncle Archibald. I wonder what they would make of it all. They would at intervals, of course, be bumping into things and people. But would touch and radio-sense alone make our world intelligible ? I wonder . . .

When we begin trying to quit our anthropocentry and discover what the world might be like if only we had other organs of body and mind for its assaying, we must flounder and bump in a not dissimilar fashion.

Even the few senses that we do possess are determined by our environment. Sweet things are pleasant to us : sugar is sweet ; so is ' sugar of lead '—lead acetate ; sugar is nutritious, lead acetate a poison. The biologist will conclude, and with perfect reason, that if sugar was as rare as lead acetate in nature, lead acetate as common as sugar, we should then abominate and reject sweet things as emphatically as we now do filth or acids or over-hot liquids.

But I must pause, and find a moral for my tale ; for all will agree that a moral has been so long out of fashion that it is now fast becoming fashionable again.

Every schoolboy, as Macaulay would say, knows William of Occam's Razor—that philosophical tool of admirable properties : ' *Entia non multiplicanda propter necessitatem.*'

We want another razor—a Relativist Razor ; and with that we will carry out barbering operations worthy of another Shaving of Shagpat : we will shave the Absolute.

The hoary Absolute, enormous and venerable, grey-bearded and grey-locked—he sits enthroned, wielding tremendous power, filling young minds with fear and awe.

Up barbers and at him ! Heat the water of your enthusiasm :

lather those disguising appurtenances. See the tufts collapse into the white foam—feel the hairy jungles melt away before your steel ! And at the end, when the last hair falls, you will wipe away the lather, and look upon that face and see—ah, what indeed ?

I will not be so banal as to attempt to describe that sight in detail. You will have seen it already in your mind's eye : ' or else ' (to quote Mr. Belloc) ' or else you will not ; I cannot be positive which.' If not, you never will ; if yes, what need to waste more of the compositor's time ? But of him who forges that razor, who arms those barbers, who gives them courage for their colossal task, of him shall a new Lucretius sing.

LA VACHE.

I.

ON an idle afternoon in Boulogne I met Hannibal Bled, and he dragged me into the Grand Café and told me this story over a series of *consommations*. Frankly, I do not know whether to believe it or not. I have no desire to be challenged by Hannibal, who is an expert swordsman and an excellent shot; so I hasten to explain that I am to be understood as saying that I do not know whether to believe *all* of it or not. I suspect it because Hannibal Bled is a creative genius—his *feuilletons* in the *Journal du Nord* are renowned far beyond the borders of the Pas de Calais; and while much of his tale bears the unmistakable stamp of truth, I seem to detect a trace of artistry about its climax. I don't doubt that the bulk of it rests on fact—all the best lies do. I dare say a cow was washed off some cattle-boat in the Channel and came to land on the coast of the Pas de Calais; and it is also very likely that Celestine Capy had a lover who was not quite the thing. For the rest my Scottish canniness forbids me to vouch; I narrate to you the story Bled narrated to me—I give what I was given.

The protagonists in the drama are, firstly, the said Celestine Capy, *bonne à tout faire* to Madame Vriesse, Hannibal's cousin, at the little seaside villa known as Les Flots. Celestine was a buxom, comely creature, young and vigorous, addicted to wearing emerald green with royal blue, but otherwise thoroughly good. The story indeed shows her as imbued with a devotion to her mistress which in these days is well-nigh miraculous, even in France. She kept company with a young man who drove a *camion*—but he is of no importance. Secondly, we have to deal with Edouard Wagon, plumber by profession, apache by inclination, and Communist by politics. Thirdly, of course, there is La Vache herself. As a minor character we have Madame Vriesse, a widowed lady of a certain age; and there is a shifting chorus of coastguards, fisherfolk, gendarmes, and sportsmen. All the acts of the piece take place at Les Flots.

I am privileged to know Les Flots—it was there I first met Hannibal Bled—and it is charming. It perches on the crest of

a jutting promontory which tumbles down into the sea in a *falaise* which romance might dignify with the title of cliff. It is aptly named, for it is practically in the sea, and in any sort of heavy weather the spray bespatters its upstairs windows lavishly. Madame Vriesse has lived there all the spring and summer for as many years as it would become a gentleman to forget, and she is devoted to it. She winters in a suburb of Paris, but when the chestnut buds burst on the boulevards Les Flots becomes the only possible habitation. What Celestine does in the winter I do not know—probably she hibernates. It is impossible to think of summer weather at Les Flots without Madame Vriesse, and it is inconceivable that Celestine can have any separate existence apart from these. No doubt she would tell you so herself.

The proximity of Les Flots to its namesakes has one unfortunate drawback—when there is a specially high tide flotsam and jetsam are washed into the drains and the drains are blocked. In the momentous spring with which we are concerned there was a series of such tides, and the drainage problem reached a crisis. The local man who had nursed the drains of Les Flots for a decade was forced to confess himself beaten, and it became necessary to seek a more competent authority in Boulogne. In an evil hour the Boulogne firm sent out Edouard Wagon. Had Madame Vriesse or Celestine had an idea of what they admitted when Edouard knocked at their door, that door would have remained for ever bolted and barred; but it is the traditional custom of the Old Enemy to enter in sheep's clothing. The guise of a plumber may conceivably suit him as well as any other.

Edouard Wagon had all the conventional attributes of a plumber; in addition he had a persuasive manner and the face of a devil. It will be unnecessary to explain that I do not imply that he was ugly—far from it; I say he had the face of a devil. He had also the nature of a devil, but that was less apparent. It was known, however, to a society of crazy beings, calling themselves for no very apparent reason *Les Rats Verts*, who met weekly in a back street near Dernier Sou to discuss anarchy and to correspond with a blood-and-thunder brotherhood in Paris. Of these Edouard was a leader, and if he had done the tenth part of what he threatened, Red Russia would have established a promising colony in the *arrondissement* of Boulogne. All his activities were restrained, however, except his insensate hatred of humanity, which flourished under repression and tortured him day and night. But he was

a good plumber, and he solved the problem of the drains of Les Flots. In the process of solution he attracted Celestine and Celestine was attracted by him.

True to the traditions of his caste, Edouard suggested making a job of the drains of Les Flots once and for all; and Madame Vriesse, impressed with his capacities and urged no doubt by the infatuated Celestine, agreed. Edouard's visits became long and frequent, and there is no reason to doubt—though Celestine denied it later—that his little *affaire* went very well indeed. The Celestines of this world are easy meat to young men with persuasive manners and the faces of devils. He told her of the little business he intended to set up, of his aged mother who urged him to marry an ideal female bearing a curious resemblance to Celestine, of the irreproachable society in which he moved in Boulogne; in fact he told her all the necessary and convenient lies. Then someone—it is reasonable to suspect the young man who drove the *camion*—unearthed and communicated the truth. The little business was demonstrated a myth, the aged mother with whom he lived became a far from aged lady of doubtful repute, and the irreproachable society the *Rats Verts* and their associates. 'He is going to see the inside of a prison soon, that one,' said the informant. Celestine wept.

'Oh, madame,' she wailed to her mistress, 'what am I to do? What am I to say to him?'

'What to do?' said Madame Vriesse. 'What to say? You must get rid of him, *ma pauvre*, at once.' And she directed Edouard to complete his researches into the drainage question and take his departure.

Edouard finished his work, but he did not go—or rather he went only to return. He was a man whose desires had always thriven under repression, and so it was with his passion for Celestine. He came back on the Sunday afternoon and made a scene. He vowed repentance and reform, he swore he had cast the lady of little repute from his door, he asseverated that henceforward the *gendarmerie* should have no cause to ponder on the name of Edouard Wagon. In addition to being a good plumber he proved himself a good actor. Celestine, simple soul, was melted; she left him in the kitchen and burst into the sitting-room to take counsel of Madame Vriesse. The walls of Les Flots are thin and Edouard had spoken in a voice calculated to reach the back tiers of any known gallery; as a result Madame Vriesse had been an unwilling auditor of his declamations.

'What shall I say to him?' wailed Celestine again.

'Say to him!' said Madame with a fine pretence of fortitude. 'Say to him that if he comes back here I will send for the police.'

'But, Madame, perhaps it is true what he says.'

'It is not true. He is a liar. *Il s'est payé votre tête*. Send him away!' Celestine weepingly complied.

Edouard retired muttering to Dernier Sou, and from there he tried letters. He wrote a *résumé*—several *résumés*—of his previous arguments; he wrote a declaration of his love; he enclosed a correspondence renouncing his former inamorata (the lady's letters were highly realistic); he wrote that he was seriously ill; he wrote that he was dying; only a sense of artistry prevented him from writing that he was dead. Celestine sat in front of the kitchen fire and read the letters, and stared into the stove, and twisted her handkerchief in her hardworking hands. From time to time she showed the letters to Madame Vriesse, or read haltingly impassioned extracts.

'He writes that he loves me only—that he will give up anything for me.'

'Be patient, Celestine, and in time he will even give up writing to you. It is twenty-five centimes a time for stamps—sometimes with these fat letters it must be even more. He cannot support such a drain on his income. It will cease.'

'But, Madame—'

'And besides you know his writing. You are not obliged to take delivery of his letters. Send them back.' But Celestine's curiosity would not allow her to do that. They were such beautiful letters to get.

Possibly financial considerations had also suggested themselves to Edouard; at all events he put the price of three letters into a tram ticket and reappeared one Sunday afternoon at Les Flots. He watched from a convenient station till he saw Madame Vriesse go out; then he entered unceremoniously by the open coal-cellar door and presented himself suddenly in the kitchen. Celestine, sitting by the fire with a crumpled letter and a tear-sodden handkerchief, sprang up with a shriek. Consternation prevented her from observing a curious square bulge under Edouard's coat.

Edouard supplicated no longer; he took the high hand.

'Ah, my most false!' he shouted so that the roof rang with his roar. 'Now we will talk. Now it comes to a plain yes or no.'

I will endure this insupportable agony no longer. Will you have me or will you not ?

Celestine summoned up her courage.

'Atrocious toad !' she said. '*Fripouille !* No ! No ! No !' Edouard's eyes glittered.

'*Eh bien,*' said he. '*C'est fini !*' He whipped from under his coat a little reddish box like a travelling-clock and set it on the kitchen table. '*Regardez donc !* I touch this button, and what happens ? Pouf ! Bang ! And we seek Paradise together.'

He hurled a dish-cover to the floor with an illustrative crash, dinting it permanently. Celestine, white as a sheet, tottered to the window, her mouth wide open for the shriek that would not come.

'*Comment ?*' said Edouard, who must have been enjoying himself thoroughly. 'You turn pale. *Alors,* I give one more instant. Yes or no ?'

Celestine, fainting with terror, could have said neither the one nor the other. But her eyes turned to the window and, as if in another world, she saw the blue uniform of a coastguard who was consoling himself with a pipe in a sheltered corner of the bents. Believing it to be her last action in life, she threw open the window and screamed. The wind was blowing strongly against her and the coastguard heard nothing ; but M. Wagon snatched up his box and departed hastily in the direction of Boulogne.

But next day there came another letter. It announced that Edouard, despairing finally, would give himself the pleasure of drowning himself before Celestine's eyes on the beach in front of Les Flots on the following afternoon. The distracted Celestine showed this fresh effusion to Madame Vriesse.

'*Farceur !*' said Madame. 'What a performance ! He will do no such thing. *Ma chère Celestine,* he will not even come. It is a trick.'

But they were both at the sitting-room window on the following afternoon, and they were both quick to identify a small alert figure that came trudging along the wide stretch of sand from the west. Celestine had a tight hold of her mistress's hand, but despite all, her nerve gave way.

'Oh, Madame ! Oh, Madame ! If he were to drown himself for me !'

'It would be a very good thing,' said Madame Vriesse.

'I should destroy myself. Oh, *grand Dieu,* I can bear this

no longer. I must go to the kitchen. Watch, Madame, in mercy's name, and call out to me what he does.'

She fled, and Madame Vriesse, like a second Sister Anne, remained at the window.

'Qu'est-ce qu'il fait maintenant, Madame?'

'He is standing on the beach looking at the house.'

A pause.

'Oh, Madame, qu'est-ce qu'il fait?'

'He is still looking at the house . . . He gesticulates . . . He strides about.'

A longer pause.

'Qu'est-ce qu'il——'

'He is throwing a stone at a bird,' said Madame Vriesse quickly. But he was doing something much more terrible; he was taking off his boots.

'Qu'est-ce qu'——'

'He is still looking at the house.' So he was, but he had taken off his boots and his socks and his coat and his vest. He had scribbled something and pinned it to the sand.

('Beast! Imbecile!') said Madame Vriesse to the window-pane. *'Dépêchez-vous donc.* Is it necessary that you take an afternoon to drown your abominable body? Ah, no; it was too good to last.')

'Madame——'

'He is sitting on the sand.' He was; he was putting on his boots again.

'Et maintenant, Madame?'

'He is going away again. Come quickly and you will see him.'

Hand in hand they watched the figure recede the way it had come. Celestine babbled incoherent thanksgivings; not so Madame Vriesse.

For a week there was peace; then Edouard wrote once more. He announced that he would shoot himself on the following afternoon in the front garden of Les Flots.

'I am tired of this pantomime,' said Madame Vriesse. 'It must cease. This time it is I who will reply. I am going to astonish you, my comedian!'

She informed M. Wagon that as proprietrix of Les Flots she felt her permission should have been solicited before any entertainment was given on her premises; but formality would be waived. There would be no objection to M. Wagon's killing himself

in the front garden at the hour proposed provided the minimum of mess was made. Unfortunately, engagements called both herself and Mlle. Capy away for the afternoon, but she was arranging that a couple of *gendarmes* should be present with a cart in which to convey the corpse to the mortuary. She requested M. Wagon to agree in her most respectful sentiments. She has the Bled sense of humour has Madame Vriesse, and it must have been a good letter.

At all events the pantomime ceased ; Edouard gave it up.

II.

Then, in the midst of a belated spring storm of unusual violence, riding on seas great with destiny, came La Vache.

On a fair morning after the gale Madame Vriesse was distressed. She was conscious of a heaviness in the air, an unpleasantness, a something.

'My Celestine,' she said, 'I fear we shall have to recall your friend Monsieur Wagon.'

'Non, non,' said Celestine. '*C'est la vache.*' (The first recorded utterance of these two baleful words.)

'*La vache?* What can the child mean?'

'*Il y a une vache sur les rochers, Madame.*'

'A cow on the rocks! My Celestine, how can there be such a thing?'

'But yes, Madame! It has been washed up by the sea. It is stuck between two big rocks. It is dead. If Madame will give herself the trouble——'

Madame gave herself the trouble. La Vache lay stiffly on her back, her four absurd legs pointing to heaven. '*J'y suis,*' she seemed to declare, '*J'y reste.*' She was jammed between two large rocks as Celestine had said. She appeared to be jammed very tightly. And she was beyond question very dead.

'How is it possible,' sighed Madame Vriesse, 'that I am subjected to such misfortunes? First your Edouard, now this deplorable cow. What a season it has been. The cow must be removed.'

Once, far away in Malabar, there was a Mohammedan contractor who had an elephant, and the elephant died in its shed and the contractor did nothing. In the end his neighbours brought a suit against him which they eventually won, and the offending

object succumbed to treatment of some sort. I interrupted Hannibal to tell him about this elephant.

'How inestimable are the blessings of the law,' said he. 'We laymen never know where they begin or end. But figure to yourself the situation of my poor cousin. One cannot go to law with the sea, and the sea refused to do anything. Here was this insolent animal in a ridiculous position, and stuck so fast between these accursed rocks that it was impossible to budge it a millimetre one way or the other. It was high above the highest high-water mark. Summer was approaching. In all probability no tide would touch it for months—not till the winter. By which time—What a catastrophe.'

I have said that Madame Vriesse has the Bled sense of humour; one may suppose that the ridiculous aspects of the case were not lost upon her. But she is imbued also with a fine fighting spirit. Weaker hearts would have fled; Madame Vriesse fought. La Vache had to be tackled. There is always a half gale blowing at Les Flots, and ninety days out of a hundred it blows from the sea. Either La Vache must be overcome or Les Flots must be evacuated for an indefinite period. The latter course, with the season just beginning, was altogether unthinkable.

Madame Vriesse appealed to the fishermen who set little baited lines in the sand every time the tide goes back. Headed by Celestine's father, these braves laid siege to La Vache for a whole forenoon, pulling, pushing, chipping at the rocks, undermining. La Vache moved not the breadth of one of their own lines. They expressed themselves desolated, but they had done their possible. They drank some of Madame Vriesse's wine and went away.

Madame next enlisted the sympathies of the sportsmen—peripatetic beings who wander to and fro among the sand dunes shooting—or more frequently missing—larks, sandpipers and other creatures not commonly classed among the sporting birds. The sportsmen were sympathetic, they were garrulous, they accepted refreshments in large quantities, but there they ended. '*J'y suis,*' said La Vache more insistently than ever, '*J'y reste.*'

There remained but three more tribes in the local population—the peasantry, the coastguards, and the caddies on the golf course. The first of these were guaranteed to refuse any request, however piteous, which entailed unusual or avoidable work; and the last being mostly composed of small girls under the age of ten, promised little assistance even to the most optimistic. Madame Vriesse

accordingly called in M. Roux, her favourite of the many coast-guards who patrolled daily past Les Flots. M. Roux was a great relief.

'Dismiss your apprehensions,' said he, 'the thing is already done.'

M. Roux mobilised a large body of his fellows with one or two *gendarmes* thrown in. They arrived bearing formidable ropes, and scrambled down the *falaise* for the utter extinction of La Vache. Two hours later they returned crestfallen and rather unwell. They drank six litres of Madame Vriesse's *bon ordinaire*; and in desperation the unhappy lady suggested a second onslaught.

M. Roux threw up his hands and rolled his eyes towards the kitchen ceiling.

'*Pas possible!*' said he. '*Je fais mon service, Madame. . . . Mais cette vache! . . . C'est incroyable.*'

He led away his platoon, ropes and all. Madame Vriesse wept at last.

'You know my cousin,' said Hannibal. 'You know her views. *Dans la saison*, it is for her Les Flots or nothing. To her Boulogne is a town of the most insupportable. There was no alternative but to return for a time to Paris. Figure to yourself a suburb of Paris in June as a substitute for Les Flots. What an idea! Does it astonish you to hear me say she wept? There was the little house all ready for the summer, there was the fine weather, there were all her little things unpacked and arranged. Now all must be undone—the house closed and shuttered once more, the trunks packed, the *camion* of Pierre ordered to convey the luggage to the station. Happiness blasted. A dream destroyed. Can you wonder that she wept?'

"Celestine," she said, "we are vanquished. Our fate is hard. There are forty miles of *plage* along this coast; why must this vile animal choose the few yards before our door? It is not just. My summer is destroyed. Go and begin to pack my things."

'And Celestine, that devoted child, wept too. Her mistress's disappointment was her own. It was *triste*.

'In floods of tears they got out the trunks from the box-room and began to pack.'

III.

A day passed; many of the boxes were packed; the silver was counted and locked away; the *camion* of Pierre was commanded.

Then, in the middle of the afternoon, Celestine burst hurriedly into the sitting-room where her mistress sat by the window gazing tearfully at an azure sea, a radiant sky, golden miles of sand.

'*Oh, Madame, Madame, c'est Edouard Wagon qui s'approche !*'

Madame Vriesse was resigned.

'*Alors,*' she said, 'what can it matter now ? If a hundred Edouard Wagons approach, it makes nothing. We have learned to endure worse calamities than Edouard Wagon. Send him away and get on with the packing.'

Edouard's knock sounded at the door. Celestine opened to the devil once again.

There stood now on the step neither the assassin, the lover, nor the suicide—merely a competent young plumber calling for orders. Under the left side of his coat something bulged squarely, as it might have been the tools of his trade. He smiled pleasantly and raised his cap ; he might have been a stranger.

'One says,' he remarked, 'that you have here a cow.'

'It is the truth,' said Celestine miserably, 'we are frightfully afflicted. But what is it to you ?'

Edouard smiled ; he whipped again from under his coat the same little red box like a travelling-clock.

'*Regardez, m'amie,*' he said pleasantly. 'Here is what is going to settle your cow for you, *hein ?* Here is what will give wings to your cow so that it will fly away and never come back.'

Joy cast out fear ; Celestine gripped his arm with shining eyes.

'Edouard !' cried she. 'Is it then possible ? Come quickly and show to Madame. Quick !'

Edouard still smiled, but he replaced the little box under his coat and made no move to follow Celestine's tugs at his arm.

'*Un petit moment,*' said he. '*Nous ne sommes pas pressés.* Madame will wish to see the little toy ; that is understood. But first of all there is a little matter to be arranged.'

Celestine's joy turned to sickening terror, her hand fell to her side and she leant against the doorpost for support.

'And that is ?' she asked, though she knew very well.

'A little question of payment.' Edouard's smile remained fixed, but it began to look as incongruous on his face as a false moustache. The competent young plumber was merging slowly into the devil. 'Terms must arrange themselves, my Celestine. I am not a philanthropist—me. This pretty little mechanism took me a long time to make—all my leisure moments for nearly

a year. It is not so much a box that you see there as a year in the life of Edouard Wagon. That is not nothing. It cannot be destroyed without recompense.'

Celestine gaped at him round-eyed.

'What is it that you want?'

'*Tiens!*' mocked Edouard. 'What an actress! One is going to employ you yet in the *opéra comique*. My little one, my little sugar doll, I want—you!'

Celestine burst into tears.

'No, no, no!' she sobbed. 'Never—never in life!'

Edouard eyed her for a moment; his face had the expression of a chemist watching a process in a test tube.

'*Eh bien,*' said he, 'I made a mistake.' And turned to depart. 'I see I am not required after all.'

It was then that Celestine's supreme devotion manifested itself. She thought of that lonely figure in the sitting-room gazing out with wistful, tear-dimmed eyes at the sea and the sand. If Madame went away to Paris now, she could not come back again till another season; Madame was not a millionairess, and the expenses would forbid it. It was going to be a season of wonderful weather—Capy and all the fisherfolk said so. Madame was not so young; perhaps another season might never come; perhaps when it came she would be unable to enjoy Les Flots. Celestine's remorseless memory hurled at her a hundred memories, a thousand associations. She threw herself, said Hannibal, on her knees.

'Edouard, Edouard,' she wailed, 'have mercy!'

Edouard looked down at her coldly.

'Who is talking about mercy?' said he. 'I come here'—he tapped the box—'with my instruments to offer a service, and you will not pay for it. That's all. Or will you?'

He turned away again with admirable indifference.

'Monster!' she screamed. 'Brute! I pay, I pay! *Entrez donc par la salle.*'

'*Tout s'arrange,*' said Edouard complacently, and took out his box again.

In the sitting-room he stood, cap in hand, the model of a respectable workman, while Celestine hysterically explained his proposals in regard to La Vache. She said nothing, needless to say, of his further proposals in regard to herself.

But Madame Vriesse was sceptical. She had heard from

Celestine the tale of the box's previous appearance, and she regarded it merely as a rather silly sort of bluff.

'It does not work,' she said. 'It is a trick.'

'It *does* work,' said Edouard.

I should have saved myself much description of Edouard if I could have told this incident first. For when he said that, and they looked at his face and heard the tone of his voice, they knew instantly that it *did* work. That was Edouard. They knew at once that he really held in his hand no trick, no toy, but a terrible thing that could lift the roof off Les Flots and make of their three human bodies objects as horribly ridiculous as La Vache herself. They shrank from him clinging to one another, mistress and maid. And for all her courage it was Madame who clung the more fervidly of the two.

'Oh, Celestine,' she said. 'Get him away. Tell him what to do quickly. Make him take it away.'

Celestine pulled herself together for a supreme effort.

'Go on, imbecile,' she said. 'Don't stand there grinning like a cat. Can't you see you are frightening Madame? Go and do your business, and—and—return. *Ça vous va?*'

'*Ça va!*' said Edouard, and went whistling down over the *falaise*.

'You have an intelligence, *mon vieux*,' said Hannibal at this stage. 'I will not insult it by describing to you the feelings of those two women left alone in the house, unable, by the abruptness of the cliff, to see anything that goes on. Madame in the sitting-room has three fears in regard to the explosives of Edouard—first that they will do himself some injury, second that they will be so powerful as to destroy Les Flots, third that they will be insufficiently powerful to destroy La Vache. Celestine in the kitchen is distracted by a more terrible anguish. Edouard will succeed, beyond doubt he will succeed; La Vache will be blown to fragments; *Madame ma cousine* will remain tranquil at Les Flots. But at what a cost, at how terrible a cost. It is at the cost of Celestine's life. Begone cherished visions of a cottage with Pierre of the *camion*, of little rosy children and a life in the country. Instead, the horrors of a back street in Dernier Sou, marriage to a monster, an assassin, a savage. To Celestine the great passion of her life is devotion to her mistress; she must then espouse a being who denies to all mistresses the right to exist, an abominable anarchist who will one day assuredly be hanged. *Figurez-vous!*

'Is there then no escape? She can deceive him, she can go back upon her promise. No, she fears him too much. She can at all events terminate her agonies—she can cut her throat. Alas, she is again too timid. She can supplicate assistance from her Pierre, and expose him to the danger of instant death. What a dilemma! Weeping, she falls to her knees. 'Holy——'

'Hannibal,' I said, 'this is not a *feuilleton*.'

'You do not then admire the *feuilletons*?' he said with some asperity. '*Alors*, I have said you have an intelligence—that says all. . . . Consider, then, how into this household I have described there burst suddenly the roar of a tremendous explosion. A detonation, that! A cataclysm! Celestine rushes into the *salle*. Clouds of dust obscure the prospect, pieces of the cliff fly in the air like birds, pieces also possibly of La Vache. It is stupendous. From the distance comes hastening a coastguard.

'Trembling they peer over the cliff. A chasm yawns before their eyes. La Vache is gone!

'Trembling still they venture at last to descend. My cousin leans on Celestine, who is herself almost insensible from apprehension. Yes, La Vache has certainly gone. Les Flots is restored.

"What fortune!" says my cousin. "For the first time I feel a kindness for that Wagon. Call him, Celestine, that I may tell him so."

'And Celestine calls waveringly, "Edouard! Edouard! Where art thou?" But there is no response, no sound save the gentle music of the sea.'

Hannibal's voice ceased; he seemed to fall into a dream. The chatter of the café surged round us; the string orchestra began to tune up with excruciating discords.

'Well,' I said at last, 'where *was* he?'

Hannibal looked at me with pity on his face.

'And I have said you had intelligence!' he exclaimed. 'You deny then the existence of a Providence? You decline to see a purpose in the creation? You dispense with the ethics of good and evil?'

'I don't,' I said. 'I only ask—what *had* happened to Edouard?'

'An unanswerable inquiry,' said Hannibal solemnly. 'Infidel, you have to be told, it seems, that Edouard also had gone. He was a plumber, not a bomb-maker. He was but an amateur in the manufacture of these delicate mechanisms; one must assume

that he had miscalculated the timing apparatus. In disintegrating La Vache he had disintegrated also his abominable self.' He shrugged his shoulders. '*V'là tout !*'

It was here that I looked at Hannibal very hard. He met my gaze without flinching.

'*Que voulez-vous ?*' said he. 'That is the story. That is what happened at Les Flots. That is the tragedy of La Vache. Or the comedy, if you like—*ça m'est égal.*'

I decided to let well alone.

'It is a history, that,' I told him.

'It is a story worth writing. It is better than many you have written. I make you a present of it. Write it, *mon ami*, it is yours.'

Well, I look no gift horses in the mouth. The story is told.

HILTON BROWN.

THE SILVER HOARD OF TRAPRAIN LAW.

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL G. R. B. SPAIN, C.M.G.

‘For the heart it must go with the treasure, down
to the sea in ships.’

MANY passengers between London and Edinburgh on the London and North Eastern Railway, while passing through the county of Haddingtonshire in Scotland, must have noticed a conspicuous whale-backed hill to the south of the line, for the railway here runs east and west.

The hill is a particularly noticeable feature because it stands as a north-eastern outlyer to the Lammermuir Hills on a fairly level country of rich arable land; it is known throughout the Lowlands as Traprain Law. The hill rises to some 400 feet above the surrounding country, and its highest point is 700 feet above the level of the sea.

Traprain is part of the Earl of Balfour's Whittinghame property, an estate famous for its admirably cultivated tillage lands, and its almost impossibly tall pheasants!

To archaeologists the Law has always been attractive. Traces of extensive earthworks ring the upper portions of the hill, and the tradition that King Loth held his court there, the mythical king who gave his name to the Lothian and may, perhaps, be equated with Lugh the Keltic sun god, pointed to a pre-Roman occupation. The near-by estuary of the Haddington Tyne has been claimed as the Tanaus, that lost estuary of Tacitus, the forgotten river-mouth to which the Roman general Agricola led his veterans in his successful A.D. 80 campaign, when the legions moved north in the early summer of that year, and ‘opened up’ new country and new races with their short/stabbing swords.

In 1914 the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland arranged to undertake excavations on Traprain, and an area on the west of the hill below the highest point, where there was a considerable depth of soil, was chosen as being the most suitable. The work was under the control of Mr. A. O. Curle and Mr. J. E. Cree of the Society, and the spade soon revealed the fact that the whole Law had been occupied by man from the neolithic period down to the end of the fourth century A.D. Relics of stone, bronze, pottery and iron

were numerous and various, and foundations of circular and semi-circular undressed stonework showed that a series of prehistoric hutments had been built at different times and ages, both as small and large dwellings. The absence of the characteristic masonry of the Roman period showed that the legions at any rate had not tarried on the western slopes of Traprain. The war put an end to excavation in 1915, and work was recommenced in 1919.

Digging had been in progress some two weeks in 1919, and the latest floor level below the turf had been cleared over a square of 50 feet, when the foreman, loosening the lower level soil with a pick, struck a substance new and strange to him. Turning up the earth he brought to light the major portion of a fine silver bowl, with heavy beading round the rim. Further investigation revealed a small pit in the soil of the lower levels, two feet in diameter, and some two feet in depth. The hole was crammed with flattened and broken silver plate of the most elaborate and interesting types. The treasure showed no signs of having been enclosed in any sack nor chest, but appeared to have been hurriedly tumbled into a large cavity, probably quickly excavated, filled with the hoard, and then covered over with earth.

When found the general condition of the hoard was deplorable : smashed and battered, cut up and flattened for easy transport and ultimate melting by its last owners, it revealed all too plainly that here was the work of the barbarian at his worst, out for the value of the metal irrespective of the beauty or the art of the silver-ware. With the treasure were four silver coins, one of Valens, who reigned A.D. 364-378, one of Valentinian II, who reigned A.D. 375-392, and two of Honorius, who reigned A.D. 395-423. Thus the silver had been buried somewhere about the beginning of the fifth century. The collection consisted of about one hundred and sixty fragments of pure silver, and it weighed over 770 oz. troy weight ; by far the greatest and most important hoard of silver-ware ever recorded as being found in the British Isles. Bowls flattened, broken, and twisted, spoons with handles torn off or bent, flagons in pieces and fragments, scraps in quantity and numerous packets of silver folded up and hammered flat. Only two vessels were complete, a triangular dish with a beaded rim, and a little circular bowl with a dolphin handle. One large fluted dish had been only doubled up, one side being turned inwards over the other.

In the hands of Mr. William Brook of Edinburgh, and his craftsmen, this chaotic mass of silver was carefully treated. With the

utmost patience each fragment was annealed and cooled again and again, gradually unfolded and straightened until the original designs were in many cases recovered from the confusion ; a task for experts spread over many months.

The miscellaneous character of the silver is one of the most striking features of the find. Christian church plate, pagan temple plate, table plate and personal ornaments were all heaped together. The variety of the designs and the themes employed to decorate the objects are a fascinating study. Incidents from the Old and New Testaments are figured on a beautiful flagon reconstructed by Mr. Brook. Here are Adam, Eve, and the Serpent ; Moses striking the rock ; the Adoration of the Magi ; and the fragments of a fourth group so far not identified. The designs are all wrought in repoussé in high relief on the sides. Round the upper portion are a series of sheep and rams with a small house in the background. Below the Biblical figures is a circle of leafless vine ornament in a wavy line pattern with bunches of grapes projecting alternately from either side of the curved stem, a precisely similar design to that round the rim of the famous *Lanx* found in the Northumberland Tyne at Corbridge in 1734 and now at Alnwick Castle. Another flagon has the mysterious inscription *FRYMIACOEISIAI . CT* and the Christian Chi-Rho monogram so much in use during the Constantine period flanked by Alpha and Omega. Two of the spoons have the Chi-Rho monogram in the centre of the bowls, and a small silver wine-strainer has the same Chi-Rho symbol punctured in the metal as a series of small holes, with *IESVS CHRISTVS* in a similar punctured pattern round the bowl.

The pagan silver is even more interesting, and the finest piece of the whole series is a mere fragment of a beautiful flagon. Here is the god Pan in pursuit of a vanished nymph, whose hand and parts of her fluttering draperies alone remain ; behind the god is a conventionalised altar and at his feet lie his pipes of reed, a skin is twisted round his left arm and his right arm is extended in appeal to the lost fleeing female figure ; to balance Pan on the opposite side of the altar is a dancing figure of Hermaphrodite—both these figures are nude, and the fragment shows a superiority in modelling and treatment in advance of the other designs of the hoard. This fragment was folded into a packet when found and inside was a gilded square-shaped object of unknown use.

Another fragment of a flagon shows the story of the recognition of Ulysses, from Homer, with Penelope and fragments of three maidens. Eurykleia is washing the foot of the hero in a basin. All the figures are fully clad and Penelope holds a distaff. Only

the foot of Ulysses remains. The treatment of the clothing is very similar to that of the Corbridge Lanx. Other noteworthy objects are a beautiful fluted dish twelve inches in diameter with a rather degenerate figure of a Nereid riding on a strange lion-headed monster in the midst of the sea and very Byzantine in character: and half a bowl with a spirited hunting scene where bears, wolves, and panthers seize deer in mid-flight; between the groups of these animals are human masks, and in the interior at the bottom of the same fragment is a large head of Hercules in much the same style of late Roman art as the so-called head of Hadrian, a bronze fragment of a statue in the round found in the Thames and now in the British Museum.

A rather crude Aphrodite rising from the sea is shown on a fragment from the bottom of a flat silver dish. The goddess is holding her wet tresses in her hands, and she has fish and sea-shells on both sides as supporters. A small fragment shows a portion of Victory crowning the head of Dionysus with a wreath. Dionysus is recognisable by the ivy leaves and berries entwined in his curly hair.

Another delightful fragment shows two little fishermen quite naked in a tiny boat with an upturned prow and stern, and surrounded by angry fish, an ibis or a stork catching an eel, and a stray octopus!

Six small reconstructed bowls with heavily beaded rims make a beautiful group, and the fragment of a small heart-shaped silver platter with a well-drawn mullet in the centre, apparently already cooked and steaming, is certainly unusual. The unbroken circular bowl with a little dolphin as a handle is one of the most attractive items of the hoard, if not the most valuable.

Many of the pieces have graffiti scratched on them, either owners' names as contractions, or the actual weights of the original pieces of silver.

As to the locality of the original silversmiths and the date, the evidence of the art, and the evidence of the figures on the various fragments of the treasure, appear to be conclusive.

A warm sunny clime, producing the panther and the cuttle fish, representations of Biblical scenes and deities like Aphrodite, Pan, and Dionysus, can only point to Mediterranean culture of the third and fourth centuries. But if the origin of all this beautiful silver-ware was the shores of the great inland sea, nevertheless it was a strange and remarkable thing that such a mass of loot should have been so hastily buried on the top of a Scottish hill, on the east coast of Britain, about A.D. 400.

During the third and fourth centuries the Roman coasts suffered

much from the increasingly numerous pirates from the east littoral of the North Sea, and from beyond the frontiers of the Empire, who ran down the Channel in their long black keels, and harried the coastal towns and shipping.

This is shown by the appointment of special officers in Britain and Gaul, each styled 'the Count of the Saxon shore,' who were responsible for the defence of the coasts of the two Roman provinces.

Traprain Law was well beyond the control of the fourth-century Wall frontier of the Empire in Britain, and it is possible that a centre of an early if brief settlement of Saxons on the north-east coast was made at Traprain and the estuary of the Haddingtonshire Tyne. The place would be a handy locality from which to make sea raids to the South, a sort of secret base, with an admirable anchorage for the keels, and an inland fortified hill as a refuge.

The treasure seems to be some plunderer's share of a much larger mass of smashed and battered silver-plate, perhaps the spoil of a wild and forgotten sea raid along the coasts of Gaul and Spain, amid scenes of blood and cruelty, organised by a group of Saxon chiefs. Yet the problem is perplexing. Why such haste in concealment?

Did the long-reaching arm of the late Empire stretch out at last and take a sudden and fearful revenge on this nest of sea rovers? Perhaps a force under the direction of some such general as Stilicho cleared the north-east coast as far as the Firth of Forth. When the avenger came, he came quickly. If he came by land, he came by forced marches and the hurried rush of the pirates to get away to sea in the long keels moored near by in the river allowed them no time to take the treasure aboard. Hastily shovelled out of sight and the spot smoothed over, perhaps in the floor of some hut, was all the Traprain plunderers could do to save the stolen plate. But the sea robbers never came back! Like hoards all the world over the treasure remained through the years, waiting for the return of him who came not. Were the Roman galleys waiting at sea beyond the river mouth? There was little mercy shown in A.D. 400 to those who were never merciful.

It is curious to think that the passion for destruction and revenge, and the primitive greed of gain, has actually preserved for us a collection of intensely interesting objects that otherwise would have certainly been lost to the twentieth-century world.

The whole collection of silver, thanks to the kindness and generosity of the Earl of Balfour, now has a permanent home in the National Museum of Antiquities, Queen Street, Edinburgh.

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ROBERT FERGUSSON, 1750-1774.

ROBERT FERGUSSON, the Scottish poet, was born in Edinburgh on September 5, 1750, and died in the same city on October 16, 1774, a brief life, yet worthy of long remembrance. His parents, William Fergusson and Elizabeth Forbes, both children of the farm-house, in 1746 left Tarland in Aberdeenshire, and settled in the metropolis, where William Fergusson showed considerable business capacity, and, after a hard struggle with poverty, obtained a good and permanent position with the British Linen Company. Young Robert early displayed an aptitude for letters, and in 1758 joined the High School. In 1762 he was appointed to the Fergusson Bursary, which provided 'maintenance and education' for two poor children at the Grammar School of Dundee and the College of St. Andrews. So selected, he received his schooling in Dundee from 1762 to 1764, and from 1765 to 1768 was a red-gowned student at St. Andrews University.

Of these, his boyish years, few memorials remain, yet enough to reveal, that in his case, as in others, the boy was father to the man. His mother, always described as 'a woman of great worth and piety,' was wont to call him 'our darling gentle Robert,' just as Miss Ruddiman, the last survivor of his friends, loved in her old age to name him 'a dear, modest, gentle creature.' Taught by his mother to read, he was quick to envisage the meaning of the printed page. One day he burst into his mother's room in tears, exclaiming 'Oh, mother, whip me! whip me!' Astonished by the request, his mother asked his reason, and found that he had just read the words 'He that spareth the rod, hateth the child.'

In 1764, before joining the University, in company with his mother he paid a visit to Mr. John Forbes, his maternal uncle, at Round Lichnot, in Aberdeenshire, where Mr. Forbes was factor to the Earl of Finlater, and, undoubtedly, in good circumstances. This visit was of importance to the future poet. His poems fall into two classes, those of the city and those of country life. While the poems on city life are more numerous, more humorous also, and witty, those of the country display a higher imaginative power, and more intimately reveal the poet's heart. Whence came the

first impressions which gave birth to these poems, unless from this visit to Round Lichnot ?

With the life of St. Andrews the report of the young lad becomes clearer ; he was a competent Latin scholar—usually with a Virgil or Horace in his pocket ; ‘ a considerable proficient,’ also, ‘ in mathematics.’ His biographer possessed a copy of the ‘ *Anabasis*,’ with ‘ *Ex libris Rob^{ti}. Fergusson*’ written on the fly-leaf, and a rude drawing of a harp sketched below. Three traditions from this time are constant : first, that he began to write verses at St. Andrews, *vers d’occasion*, playful skits on a professor or other celebrity—fugitive pieces, of which none have been preserved ; secondly, he was much esteemed by Dr. William Wilkie, the able though eccentric Professor of Natural Philosophy, in whose house he was a frequent guest, and, during one summer, was engaged by the Professor to copy out his lectures ; thirdly, his genial and friendly disposition made him beloved by some of his fellow-students, while his wit and gaiety brought general popularity. Young men at Scottish Universities are entirely left to themselves at an age when the judicious guidance of an elder friend or tutor is peculiarly helpful. Hence popularity is apt to be a path to regrettable indiscretions, and it was so with Fergusson. An incident which occurred in his fourth year may be narrated. He had a beautiful voice, so noticeable in the College Services that he was frequently asked to officiate as Precentor, or leader of the singing. Far from regarding the selection as an honour, the boy considered that he was too often called upon to perform another’s duty. It was then customary in Scotland for persons, prevented by illness or other necessary cause from attending public worship, to give in a *line*, to be read by the Precentor, asking for the prayers of the congregation on their behalf. Fergusson, rising in the desk, with assumed nasal whine and ultra solemnity of voice—his powers of mimicry were great—pronounced the words : ‘ Remember in prayer *John Adamson*, for whom, from the sudden effects of inebriety, there appears but small hope of recovery.’ An ill-repressed titter arose from the many students present, John Adamson among them, and Fergusson was justly and severely reprimanded. Yet not repressed, for shortly afterwards another incident occurred, of which details are not given, but Fergusson was extruded from the College for four days, after which he was ‘ received in again,’ Professor Wilkie speaking warmly in his cause.

Hardly had he left College, when, by similar folly, he damaged

his prospects in the home circle. His father had died in 1767, and, from lack of means, the son could not continue his education at the University. His mother's brother invited his fatherless nephew to Round Lichnot, presumably with the intention of lending him a helping hand. One day, Lord Finlater, through whose good word Fergusson had received his bursary, was expected to dinner, Mr. Forbes asked the Laird of Meldown to meet him, and young Robert was to be of the party. The guests were late in arriving, the boy slipped off to a neighbouring wood, climbed trees birdnesting, and finally came in late for dinner, his clothes torn and ruffled, and green with tree-dust. His uncle, in great anger, ordered him from the room, the boy, in as deep dudgeon, went to his bedroom, packed up his little bundle, and started for Aberdeen, without bidding his uncle, or any inmate of the house, farewell. The two stories reveal an excess of boyish thoughtlessness, and may easily be exaggerated *in malam partem*; juster criticism of this part of his life may be found in the words of the College janitor: 'Remember Bob Fergusson? that I do! Many a time I've put him to the door. Ah! he was a tricky callant, but a *fine laddie for a' that*.'

With his return, in 1769, to his widowed mother in Edinburgh, his real difficulties and his real life began. Further study was impossible, whether for the Church, Medicine, or Law; for the profession of a 'Dominie' he felt no call; yet something he must do, both to maintain himself and, if possible, to aid his mother. After some delay he was offered a copying-clerkship in the office of the Deputy Commissary-clerk; the duties were irksome, copying legal documents, and the emolument was small—one penny per page copied. Yet he accepted the post with gladness, rejoiced to secure the prospect of subsistence, however humble. Whatever the income which he received, possibly £25 or £30 a year, he never, until his death in 1774, had any other regular employment. Evidence that with his appointment his mind was more at ease is visible in this, that his first published verses appeared in the winter of 1769. A year, however, elapsed before he began to write frequently.

In 1770 Edinburgh society was acting on the resolution no longer to speak, much less to write, in the Scots tongue which they had learned from their fathers. Fergusson accepted the ruling, and his first essays were written in classical English, his models being the smart couplets of Pope, and the flowing quatrain of

Shenstone ; and, be it said, he did no dishonour to either of his originals. In 1768 the brothers, Walter and Thomas Ruddiman, had started the *Weekly Magazine, or Edinburgh Amusement*, and early in 1771 Fergusson began to be one of their regular contributors. His first published poems were pastorals, where Corydon sings to Timanthes of Delia's virtues, and one only wonders why both editors and public found reason to praise them as they did. One early poem, however, is of a different stamp, it is an 'Ode to Hope,' and was probably written in 1770, and reflects a manly resolve to exercise his powers to the full.

'O smiling Hope! in adverse hour
 I feel thy influencing power;
 Though frowning fortune fix my lot
 In some defenceless lonely cot,
 Where Poverty, with empty hands,
 In pallid, meagre aspect stands,
 Thou canst enrobe me, 'midst the great,
 With all the crimson pomp of state;
 What cave so dark, what gloom so drear,
 So black with horror, dead with fear,
 But thou canst dart thy streaming ray,
 And change close night to open day?'

Towards the close of 1771 he made the discovery that he could express his thoughts more naturally, with fresher humour and more lively verve, in the old dialect, which still persisted throughout Scotland. Among the first 'hameil' (homely) poems so published was 'The Daft Days,' or Holidays of Christmas and New Year; it has these verses:

'Fiddlers! your pins in temper fix,
 And roset [rosin] weel your fiddle sticks,
 But banish vile Italian tricks
 From out your quorum,
 Nor fortes wi' pianos mix,
 Gie's Tullochgorum

'For nought can cheer the heart sae weel
 As can a canty Highland reel:
 It even vivifies the heel
 To skip and dance;
 Lifeless is he who cannot feel
 Its influence.'

In a few weeks followed 'The King's Birthday,' a favourite poem of Sir Walter Scott; it tells, *inter alia*, how Mons Meg, the great cannon of Edinburgh Castle, was burst in the rejoicings, and thus describes her:

'Right seldom am I gi'en to banning [swearing],
But, by my saul, ye was a cannon;
Could hit a man, had he been stannin'
In shire o' Fife,
Sax lang.Scots miles ayont Clackmannan,
And tak' his life.'

The City Guard of Edinburgh, now best remembered from *The Heart of Midlothian*, as the Porteous Riot was directed against their captain, are so well described by Fergusson, that Scott calls him their Poet-Laureate. He begs them to be gentle:

'O soldiers, for your ain dear sakes,
For Scotland's, alias Land o' Cakes,
Gie not her bairns sic deadly paiks [thrusts],
Nor be sae rude,
Wi' firelock or Lochaber aix
To spill their blude.'

The poem ends with a stanza prompted by the writer's gentler genius; his Muse refuses to record the evening misdeeds, of which some of the holiday-makers were proud; she

'Will rather to the fields resort,
Where Music gars [makes] the day seem short,
Where doggies play, and lambkins sport
On gowany braes,
Where peerless Fancy hads [holds] her court,
And tunes her lays.'

Is there not an inbred quality, what Johnson called *race*, in these verses? Do they not evince descriptive powers, quaint humour, captivating rhymes, and a higher strain of poetic feeling? His contemporaries thought so, for the poem from which the quotations are taken was read with delight from one end of Scotland to the other, and the author was hailed as a welcome successor to Allan Ramsay.

The result was natural, and for two reasons. First, for the merit of the verse. The stanza employed was familiar to Scottish readers

from Allan Ramsay, as it is familiar now from Burns. It has great capacity for picturesque description, humorous phrasing, and rhyme-surprises, and, in the writer's judgment, Fergusson's chief success in the technique of poetry is his use of this stanza, in which he is not surpassed either by his predecessor or by his successor. The stanza is an old one, and, like many other good things, entered Scotland from the south. It is frequently employed in the Yorkshire Mystery Plays, written in the fourteenth century, though with this difference: the religious writers used it as a medium for the expression of pathos, whereas the Scottish writers look to it for humour. The second reason for approval lay with the audience. Eighteenth-century Scotland is ill conceived as a land of sour faces and cold hearts; far rather was it a land of music and song. A lyric inspiration yet hung over the country, like a refreshing dew, ready to fall on all homely things, and clothe them in new and bright shapes. Had the housewife too much on her hands? She went on with her duties, singing 'Women's wark will ne'er be dune.' Was she overburdened by sorrows? She did not give way, but sang 'Werena my heart licht, I wad die.' Did a lazy maid stickle over the allotted 'stent' of wool to be carded? She did not down tools, but changed her grievance into song: 'The weary pund, the weary pund, the weary pund o' tow.' Was there a lazy hind who would rather lie abed on a wintry morning than be up at his work? He too found solace with the verse:

'Up in the mornin's 's no' for me,
Up in the mornin' early:
When a' the grund is covered wi' snaw,
I'm sure it's winter fairly.'

These rural singers were under no compact to speak or write in southern English, and Fergusson's verses at once reached their hearts.

In Edinburgh society also the young poet quickly became popular. 'For social life,' his friend Ruddiman wrote, 'he possessed an amazing variety of qualifications. He was always sprightly, always entertaining. His powers of song were very great. When seated with some select companions, over a friendly bowl, his wit flashed like lightning, striking the hearers irresistibly.' The Cape Club was a famous convivial, at times high-spirited, society of the time: the name was taken from the Cape, or head-dress, worn by the president, or 'sovereign,' on state occasions. Thomas

Lancashire, a famous actor, was the first sovereign ; David Herd, editor of 'Old Ballads,' was the second ; other members were Alexander Runciman and Henry Raeburn, the artists. Each member received a club name, with a knightly addition : Herd was Sir Scrope ; Runciman, Sir Brimstone. On October 10, 1772, Fergusson, under the sobriquet Sir Precentor, was admitted as a member of the Club, and touching the mace, or 'Holy Poker,' with his right hand, took the oath of allegiance :

'I swear devoutly by this light
To be a true and faithful Knight,
With all my might
Both day and night,
So help me Poker.'

He was then touched thrice by the royal hand, and the sovereign, uttering the letters C. F. D., explained that they stood for *Concordia Fratrum Decus*, the motto of the Club.

Admitted a member, 'Sir Precentor' was a popular knight, and much taken out in society. These acquaintanceships unfortunately led him into convivialities, too much alike for his purse and his constitution. Amid many an evening spent in gaiety, his heart was ill at ease, as his thoughts returned to his mother, working at her needle with aching fingers. Nevertheless, his industry was great and unbroken ; rarely a week passed without some contribution to the *Magazine* ; and the pieces sent were of high quality. It has been said that he received no remuneration for his poems : it was not so ; the brothers Ruddiman gave him a small sum for each contribution, and, such was the simplicity of the times, two suits of clothes annually, 'one for week-day, the other for Sabbath wear.'

At the close of 1772 he was encouraged, by subscriptions of many friends, to publish a small volume, containing nine of his Scottish poems ; the edition sold rapidly, and the author, £50 in pocket, sang with unwonted joy that

'Damon was master of gold.'

Nor was his vein dulled, for in 1773 some of his best verses followed in quick succession. Among them was 'The Farmer's Ingle,' justly considered his best composition. It consists of thirteen nine-lined stanzas, and contains a lively description of an autumn evening in the farm-house, the occupations of Gudeman

To the same year belong two poems, the Odes to the Gowdspink (Goldfinch) and the Bee, both dear to lovers of the poet. They were written in the country, the second at least, when Fergusson was staying at Broomhouse, a guest of the Laird; and, while both are attractive, the 'Ode to the Gowdspink' is of a slightly melancholy cast, as, undoubtedly, in the caged bird.

the poet sees an image of himself, condemned to sit at the desk and drudge over dreary documents. The 'Ode to the Bee' has no such note of sadness; it describes brightly the Bee's habits and haunts, and this brief account of Fergusson's poetry may well close with a quotation which reflects his naturally joyous spirit, and also records his claim to be, as in truth he was, one of the sweet singers of his native land.

He was indeed on the verge of what might have been a prosperous life, had he but known it.¹ He also had the wish, and on one occasion made a strong resolution, to flee from the temptations which the convivial habits of the time threw in his way. The resolution was not kept; he returned to his previous mode of life and paid the severest penalty—the loss of reason and of life. In 1774 his physical strength was already affected, when his mind, now over-sensitive, was well-nigh unhinged by an accidental cir-

¹ A few days after the poet's death, a letter addressed to him reached his mother. Enclosed was a note for £100, and the request that Ferguson would join the writer in India, where a suitable appointment awaited him. The donor, on hearing the truth, gave the money to Mrs. Ferguson.

cumstance. A favourite starling, caged in his bedroom, was one night worried by a cat, which had crept down the chimney. The poet at once saw in the fate of the bird an image of what might befall himself: as suddenly might he be called away. He rose with the morning, resolved to alter his course of life; never again to write verses, never to associate with the thoughtless and the gay. Like Collins, whose end was similar, and due to the same cause, he took the Bible for his only book; and his constant companion was the Rev. Dr. Erskine, of the Grey Friars' Church. The words, that he was to blame for something, 'And for many, many other follies,' were often on his lips. His mental balance was indeed shaken; still, with the quieter regimen, there was improvement and hope, when an untimely accident hastened the close. He fell from the head of a staircase, striking his head severely at the bottom, and was carried home insensible, to awake raving. His poor mother had no resource save to take him to the public asylum; as he entered, his mind returned, and he raised a piteous cry of anguish. With morning he was calmer, his mother and sister came to see him; he thanked them for their affection, and besought his sister to 'bring her seam, and sit beside him.' As they replied with tears, he sought to console them, saying that he hoped ere long to be restored to them. He was in the institution for two months, daily visited by his mother and sister; at times his mind wandered; at others he would sing Scottish melodies, especially his old favourite, the 'Birds of Endermay,' and he sang with a pathos which he had never reached before.

On the day after his death he was buried in the Canongate Churchyard, and many mourners were present. Thirteen years later, Robert Burns, in his visit to Edinburgh, sought out the grave, and found it but 'a green mound and scattered gowans.' Uncovering his head, he shed tears, and obtained leave from the Managers of the Kirk and Kirkyard to raise a headstone over the grave, on which he had this inscription engraved, which, the writer can testify, is still legible, and eloquent of the poet:

'No sculptur'd marble here, nor pompous lay,
No storied urn, or animated bust:
This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way,
To pour her sorrows o'er her poet's dust.'

A. MONTGOMERIE BELL.

BIRD-WATCHING FROM A CAMP BED.

A DIARY OF TWO DAYS.

BY WINIFRED MELLERSH.

II.

THE SECOND DAY.

THE second day was some weeks later. Again the sky was a blazing blue, and the heat hung the more heavily in that there were no songs to give it a buoyancy.

Early Morning.—Alas ! It was not the voice of the Cuckoo, Chaffinch, or Thrush that heralded in the day, but merely the boisterous haggling and chirping of Sparrows, now increased seven-fold by the many score born into the world during these weeks. A Hen Sparrow is ever, year in year out, of a dingy triteness ; a clean Cock Sparrow, with black dickey and decided markings, can be quite handsome. However, even his best friend—and I cannot imagine who that may be—must confess that the Sparrow lacks elegance of form, manner, and speech. He is as low-born as it is possible to be ; he is the Apache of the bird-world, and his strident voice is not enviable company at dawn.

Never become the slave of a Tyrant or surely you will rue it.

A debonair fellow with the bottom button of his waistcoat undone and his legs jauntily apart, the Robin-Tyrant made my acquaintance over the dinner-table. Our mutual bond has ever been food. An offering made in a spirit of homage and goodwill was speedily construed as a tax—the Tyrant, of course, being the tax-gatherer, and he deteriorated from one of the World's Workers to a mere sponge living as the lilies of the field—he certainly toiled not. For more months than I care to tell this tax has been collected, always with much bobbing and scraping, from daybreak to sundown, at least once in ten minutes. It was thrillingly funny to be awakened by this scrap of concentrated imperiousness standing within a few inches of one's face and rousing one by the fixed stare

of goggle eyes; but as the nights shortened it became wise to spread, at bedtime, a breakfast table, and to be resolutely indifferent to throaty rattlings and little thuds of importunate feet stamping on the eiderdown. His demand was for almond or biscuit—and of that one particular brand only. A splintery biscuit was thrown on the floor in disgust; stale sponge-cake he considered impossible; bacon and beef-fat positively evil; and if by mischance he dipped his bill into either he would shake his head furiously and, flying to the window-sill, would there strop his beak.

He had two methods of obtaining what he wanted. The first was the Method Coaxing, which meant sitting on my bed and, with his crest elevated to look like a beaver toque, warbling an insinuating petition. The second, the Method Insistent and the one which could not fail, was the simple device of refusing to take 'No' or to go.

On February 16 he was acquired by a wife. He did not want her, he did not like her, but he simply had to have her, and he regarded her solely as a means to an end—an end which, when it came, was large and manifold. She was tall, angular, and unsmart, and bored him excessively by following him about. He would not allow her to approach my bed, and she had, perforce, to be content with the tiny crumbs which it was not worth his while to gather up.

Thence onwards his conduct became faster and fierouser. The Method Coaxing was dropped. His capacity—always immense—for swallowing large pieces now hardly kept pace with his greed, and occasionally a hunk of biscuit must make the return journey and be tried again at a different angle.

By April 10 he was carrying away food, although still helping himself first, but a fortnight later the pressure from home was so great that he could take no thought of self. He was distraught, unkempt, his coat unbrushed, and his trousers—well, evidently the spouse no longer had time to put them under the mattress.

On May 14 three fat and speckled things, incessantly squawking and fluttering, were deposited in a bush at my elbow, and a hot and flurried father rammed large chunks down yellow throats. As he impatiently awaited supplies of biscuit he stood wearily on one leg in the manner of a hustled fellow who has not a moment in which to sit down.

Daily the children's boldness increased, until after about a week they looked to me alone for support. The Tyrant revolted

and went through a period of flighty nerviness and independence, and then—the whole story was enacted again.

Three families have I slaved for. Two families of three each have I seen become objects of indifference, then of distaste, and finally of antagonism to a once doting father. Yesterday Reuben—the eldest son of the first family—came to me with a reddening breast, a militant heart, and a pretty tenor warble. To-day—to-day at 5.15 A.M.—I was awakened by a piercing song close to my ear, to find the Tyrant and his third family—Ronald, Rowena, and Reggie—sitting on their own little table with never a crumb left of the large feast spread over-night, while the Tyrant shrilled at the top of his voice with a fierce determination to arouse me thoroughly and lastingly.

‘Is this slavery—or is it not?
And yet—do I rue it?’

Occasionally a young Cuckoo, looking singularly clumsy and out of place, drifts through the garden on his lonesome, but the adults are never to be seen or heard.

The Chaffinch is still very much to the fore, although he has no longer any time for frivolous ballads. He and his wife have brought out into the world a family of skittish boys and girls, and the responsibility is no light one. They flit about in a crowd—a noisy one—and notwithstanding that the children are still in nursery garb, duller even than their mother’s, the effect is striking as they hover around a tree and unfurl their white-barred wings.

Morning.—That prosperously retired City merchant—the Bullfinch—has been lolling on a branch tip expanding his gaudy chest in the sun’s blaze. Like many who live on the fat of the land—at someone else’s expense—he and his wife are a trifle inclined to *embonpoint* and double chins. The Bullfinch chooses his mate for life, so his private morals are above reproach, but there is a lack of respect for other people’s property which makes him extremely unpopular with the world in general.

As this particular person sat preening his feathers and gloating over his fat balance at the bank, his son—a stout, though less florid imitation of himself—hopped about below practising piping in the hope of achieving some day the famous double notes of the species. Several times he suggested that his father should get a move on, but the old gentleman was too happily occupied with his

reflections, so the typical, spoilt, lubberly son of a risen man stepped along the bough and impudently pushed his father off into space. Even then the old bird could resent nothing that his young hopeful should do, and together they flew afield to their orchard home.

Earlier in the day the saucy youth had slipped away from his parents, and had ventured on a drink and a bath—reversing the common order of things, for many habitués wash first and then drink of the bath water. As he stood on the dish rim, nervously balancing himself, I had glimpses of white such as an Edwardian lady showed at muddy crossings. After these giddy exploits he carefully wiped his chest on the grass to remove all traces of dissipation before encountering the parental eye.

From an ilex bush there issued a loud, fierce crackling, and on to the wall strutted a Robin in all the beauty of perfect plumage. The band bordering his red breast was more blue than grey, and the red at the base was curved like a heart. The brown of his back and the buff of his underparts were both so strongly tinged with green that one could not help wondering whether perchance, say in the Regency days when morals were notoriously lax, a Wood Warbler could have been introduced into this particular bird's ancestry.

Long-legged and very rotund of body, he stood within an arm's reach and peered at me with all a Robin's usual, trustful impertinence. But evidently this was not an old friend, for when I tossed towards him a delicate morsel of almond, instead of making an uncompromising dash for it, he just glanced that way—somewhat longingly it is true—then shrugged his little shoulders and with shut mouth hummed the faintest, prettiest song. While he sang his throat swelled and rippled, unveiling the soft underdown as barley swaying in a wind shows an interthreading of poppies.

Hearing a series of slate-pencilish screams I looked up, and behold! the Flycatchers had returned, bringing a whole pack of young ones. There they were, dumped down in a row on the seat-back, all of them squeaking all the time. In his maturity the Flycatcher is a silent bird, having made in his youth enough noise for a lifetime.

The parents were working very hard, using the croquet hoops as a base, and showing their long-curved wings, all cream-coloured

underneath, as they pounced on every available insect and carried them to the expectant row. But as the squeaks continued undiminished by any amount of food, the parents became increasingly agitated. Gone were the sober, mechanical movements of pre-family times; to-day heads were flurriedly screwed round until beaks pointed over tails, and when in desperation the caterers even alighted on the ground—an unusual action for Flycatchers—I realised the shortness of their legs and the long, slim lines of their bodies.

One baby broke away from the group and sat himself on the wall near me—such a fluffy fellow with pale grey breast of spotless purity. His little head was striped from forehead to nape, and his legs, bill, and eyes were all jet black. For a moment he was quiet, astounded at me and the general funniness of this world; then the hunger cravings asserted themselves and the screams began afresh, until poor Father fled after a white butterfly and brought it triumphantly to the young one, who gulped it down whole; and afterwards, for almost five seconds, there was peace.

Now Shabby is a woman of initiative and resource. She is far from being a handsome Great Tit, in fact she is shabby to plainness—her colouring is dingy, her black stripe ineffective, almost intermittent, her white eye-patches badly laundered—but for sheer brains and pluck commend me to Shabby.

In the winter it was she who set the fashion of cracking hempseed on the feeding-tray perch instead of wasting time (so valuable in those short days when stoking-hours were few) by carrying it away to the cedar tree. She it was who discovered that the feast spread inside my room for Robin was equally excellent for Great Tits. Her stout and homely figure, her very short legs and large flat feet kept always at the same wide angle, were not shown to advantage as she hopped heavily over the table, but her courage and persistence were admirable.

One day, having sneaked in through a two-inch crack, she lost her way and beat tragically against my window, leaving there a little tuft of feathers and, far worse in her opinion, dropping the trophy of biscuit. Nothing daunted she picked up another bit, but again a violent impact knocked it from her grasp. She longed passionately for freedom but even more for biscuit, so for each fresh bid she armed anew, until at the eighth or ninth attempt she found the chink of escape and, leaving a floor scattered with

biscuit, was away—to return in a few minutes no less bold or rapacious.

Small wonder then that when Beauty—a truly bedizened and resplendent fellow with daffodil waistcoat and black band broadening to the dignity of an apron—began to think seriously of such matters, he took unto himself this paragon—I use the word *took*, but 'Barkis' must have been 'willin', for Shabby never did anything against her own wish.

Poor Beauty! He had the greed but lacked the pluck to dare the undiscovered country of my room. It is not given to us all to be courageous, and his feathers were—and are—so particularly fine. In the tame safety of the feeding-tray he made a brave show. He strutted pompously with tail held high, and at the approach of a new-comer would cling upside down to a cross-bar, endeavouring to guard the bacon-bones by fluttering and scolding ferociously—but one and all treated him as the braggart that he was. Even Murky, a rather nervy Cole Tit looking like a Liliputian coal-heaver with swelled and unbrushed head, would hop derisively on to the coco-nut, and Marsh Tits—little dapper imperialled Frenchmen—nipped in and out of my window quite serenely. All ignored him save Shabby, and she out of the kindness of her stout heart showed him pity—and a firm hand.

Through the spring, whilst Shabby took upon herself the cares of a household the Magnificent One fussed about making the land ring with his cymbal notes; but now, in these days when the syringa's scent hangs heavily on the air, together they escort a turbulent, grizzling band around the garden. The youngsters are shown where to find the most succulent insects and how to strip nimbly a row of green peas, and all the time they pester their poor parents. Tom Tit's children ask unceasing questions, but the young Great Tits whine with the falling accent of discontent 'Mother, we don't want to go home. Mother, why must we go to bed?' Beauty, of course, is a mere figurehead, but Shabby, still purposeful though moth-eaten, hustles them on. *She* can manage them—or a dozen more—trust her!

Afternoon.—Why is there always a rift within the lute?

Why did Tragedy sweep down like a thunder-bolt and blast this golden afternoon?

Suddenly it sounded as if every branch of every tree were spitting forth anguished venom. Blackbirds clucked, Robins

crackled, Flycatchers squeaked, and Willow Warblers hissed—short, purposeless, demented flights were made from tree to tree—the entire bird-world seemed crazed. Then I saw in the orchard, some fifty yards away, the blue-grey head, the barred tail, and the chestnut back of a Kestrel.

If language could slay, death would have been dealt to that marauder.

He stood stolidly on the grass, clawing something, tearing it to bits. The poor birds, emboldened by his absorption, made efforts to mob him—little futile dashes, but he went steadily on with his gruesome feast. When he had quite finished he stretched himself with a loathly enjoyment, then sailed away to hover over some distant, unsuspecting field.

Gradually the fury of the cries abated to a sobbing as that of a child after an awful tempestuous passion.

A messenger whom I despatched to the tragic spot returned with a little plucking of mauled feathers; soft brown with a suspicion of speckling, they might be those of a Thrush, they might be those of a young Robin—some joyous wee life has been torn out this golden afternoon.

If one hears an excited chattering, every sentence of which ends in the inevitable query of childhood, and if there descends upon the garden a noisy mob of birds, hurling itself from tree to tree—for a certainty it is the young Blue Tits who were reared in the big cedar. All day long they rove about in a merry restless band, nominally on the quest for food, but their search is so perfunctory that surely it is for the very love of it that they cling upside down to the leaves and frailest twigs.

On June 17, deeming that the fledglings' hour of departure was at hand, I ordered my couch to be set in the shade of the cedar tree where I should have a near view of Tom Tit's box. The little bustle of preparation sadly disturbed the parents, and after I appeared on the scene they did not return to their home, but fluttered wildly from bough to bough, uttering anguished cries of instruction. I, feeling somewhat guilty, intently watched the front-door of the house. Suddenly a face—a grey, preternaturally-aged face—peered out, then with eyes blinking at the unaccustomed light, drew back. Again the little bird tentatively stretched forth her head, but she dallied over the plunge until the brothers and sisters, making up her mind, must have hoisted the poor soul on their shoulders and

heaved her out. Quite skilfully she flew on to a branch over my head, and there—and this was how I knew her sex, for no man surely would spend his first minutes in a new world straightening his hat—prinked, until a wee yellow feather drifted down to me. As fast as one bird flew away the head of another would pop up in the opening, until I, unversed in the ways and numbers of Tits and realising only the smallness of the box and the full-size of the children, felt that there must be a back entrance, and that they were doing as do the soldiers of a stage army—going off on the 'Prompt' side, and running round to enter on the 'O.P.' as another battalion. At last seven Titleds were scattered in the tree, enjoying the wondrous space and air after the squash and incredible stuffiness of their birthplace. The seventh infant, having no expelling force—save boredom—below him, had been most deliberate in his flitting, but all were such dabsters at flying that it was difficult to believe they had not already taken a trial trip.

Their backs were not markedly blue, but their waistcoats were very yellow, though lacking the thin black stripe of the parents. Blue Tits' faces are uncommonly human—the prattle of the children is equally so. These looked seven good boys and girls with hair brushed back from sloping foreheads. So is their father's now, although in the honeymoon days it was raised to form a crest.

As soon as the babes had finished unrumpling themselves, the parents, who had been anxiously hovering during the whole proceeding, insisted on their flock following them to some quiet spot where the novices could be thoroughly instructed in the manners of the world.

When all the children were well away, Tom Tit paid a fleeting visit to the house to see that nothing had been left behind. Later his wife returned and spent an hour or so going through the abode and looking at the empty beds. Afterwards she gazed pensively out of the window and conned with mingled triumph and regret the hours of the past weeks, which though filled with toil were of the happiest.

And now, alack! only six Titleds are left to roam. One morning there lay strewn under a briar-bush seven or eight tiny feathers of grey, yellow and blue.

Into this sun-baked, man-made garden jangling with the chirps—heating and dust-laden—of Sparrows there comes a vision of God's own spaces. Cool canopies of tender, swaying green; liltng

runnels with frilly edges ; still brown depths—there comes a vision of all that is peaceful and pure and beautiful, unsmirched by man.

And what brings this vision ?

A little drab bird with black top-knot singing with puffed-out throat on the birch tree, a little bird of sober looks but with the magic of another world in its voice—a Blackcap.

Evening.—Swiftly up the birch trunk with a crawling, mouse-like run wended a little insignificant, brownish bird—a Tree-Creeper. Reaching a height of six feet he flew off and, starting at the bottom, worked his way diagonally across a bare space of wall, scarcely slackening speed to thrust his long, thin, decurved bill into cracks and crannies. In the correct way he used his stiff tail as a prop, but the feathers were strangely scrubby and short. Having arrived at the coping-stone he once more dived down, then ran up a rustic trellis ; and as he spiralled a cross-bar there was a rare revelation of whitish underparts—rare because the Tree-Creeper is a modest, humble bird who shrinks from observation. He knows that his brown-veined back is the perfection of camouflage. To spend your life with nose pressed to musty, stuffy bark must be—even if it is your larder—a dull job, but always the Tree-Creeper gives a merry, squeaky chirp as he flies down to begin his new trail ; and occasionally he will rest from labour and sit on a branch making a happy little song.

A naturalist would tell you that this bird can only creep upwards and sideways, and not, like a Nuthatch, downwards also, because he lacks the necessary peculiar formation of toes. The Tree-Creeper's admirer, however, will tell you that it is because he has a stout spirit which does not tolerate any slipping back, but leads on always to higher and better things—a spirit which is not ashamed to own failure and cheerily begin all over again from the bottom.

And this particular Tree-Creeper has yet one more virtue—the worn-away condition of his tail feathers is the legacy of a supreme devotion to his ravenous family during the past weeks. All hail to little Mr. Greatheart !

A gentle hush descends upon the land. It is as if the falling dew had silenced the myriad purlings of trees and flowers. Yet now and again baby voices cleave the air with sudden sharpness, for this is the day of the child.

A Hedge-sparrow trips along the wall, her infant flops behind pinging away with a silvery voice like that of 'Tinker Bell.' The gabble of young Tits is heard on either hand. Father Greenfinch brings his little family for a drink, an attention they do not appreciate, and while he quaffs deeply to soothe his parched and roughened throat they flap impatiently, revealing their orange bars to be brilliant as compared with his paler yellow. Poor exhausted Father Greenfinch—his is almost the only 'song' nowadays, and he rasps with the desperate persistence of one trying to attain perfection against time. Mole-coloured Starlings, foolishly incapable of feeding themselves, trail across the lawn in their parents' wake. Six Martins swirl about in mid-air, then dash one after another into their nest under the eaves: a scuffle follows, and two must seek shelter elsewhere; it seems as if only by magic can four fine birds have piled into that cramped space.

A pink flush steals over the sky, and the Swifts who, with the shrill screams of village school children let loose, have been playing Catch-as-Catch-can round the telephone post, change their game to Follow-my-Leader, and mount up, up, absolutely out of sight, as if to probe this mystery which is changing the blue inverted bowl to the heart of an opal.

All around little bodies slink into thick bushes, not to emerge again before sunrise. One hears the outraged cluck of a Blackbird as he finds his favourite roosting-place occupied by some vagabond, and the impudent snicker of a Robin anxious to have the last word, rattles through the quiet; then suddenly one realises the garden is desolate—blank.

And the Swifts? Do they sleep, floating half-way between heaven and earth? Or do their scimitar wings shiver in the rays of the moon as she steals up over the hill? Do they gather a harvest of the things that fly by night, and flash into their nests in the dark hour before dawn? *No one knows.* Strange as it may seem, no one has ever witnessed their return from the upper sky—that ethereal fastness which mortal eye cannot penetrate.

And as I lie in my bed with nothing to remind me of my friends save the hoot of an Owl, the squeak and swish of a Bat, and a rustling in the ivy as a Sparrow loses its balance, I think how the morrow will dawn with Mr. Chaffinch—there's that Owl hooting now! I wonder why one never hears an Owl without thinking of those eyelids moving slowly up and down—up and down—it almost

mesmerises one to sleep. . . . Yes, the morrow will dawn with Mr. Chaffinch trilling lustily, and his hat—how stupid of me! Of course the Chaffinch has finished singing for this summer, besides, he does not wear a hat . . . but if he did . . . it would be a straw hat on the back of his head. . . . The Greenfinch has one tilted over his eyes. . . . No wonder the Sparrow looks so shabby with a boy's little tight cap bought for 3d. at a second-hand shop . . . but the Blackbird stalks in a silk topper, and the Thrush has come back from the Links in a soft felt toning with his Donegal tweeds. . . . That young Cuckoo this morning had a child's sailor—H.M.S. Cuckoo. . . . Robin wears his brown felt cocked on one side, but it is too small for his head. . . . The Starling's bowler is the wrong shape and rather rusty . . . but the Hedge-sparrow's cap of brown and grey homespun is really neat. . . . I wonder the Swift's Sky-pilot's wideawake does not blow off in the wind. . . . Mr. Fly-catcher has a Panama because he travels with the sunshine. . . . There's that Owl again—'tuwhit-tu'—an Owl wears . . . what did she wear? Funny old dear . . . oh yes! a nightcap . . . with trills . . . no, I mean frills . . . lace frills . . . Granny Owl with frills . . . and . . . trills . . . good-ni . . .

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THE TARRIER-MAN.¹

BY L. ALLEN HARKER.

'QUEER 'e is,' a woman in the village said to me. ' 'Tis said as 'e do understand what the animals says to one another like as if 'e was one of theirselves. Queer doin's goes on in that there park, 'tis said,' and she lowered her voice nervously, 'as 'e can raise them Romans as was there; when they bin ploughin' they've often come across coins and bits of coloured stone as they did use to their floors. There's summat not quite nat'ral about Whillock, though he never don't do no 'arm as I can see; but 'is eyes be funny, an' for all 'is age—an 'e's well over seventy if he's a day—he can see farther than most. Farther than most '—she repeated meaningly—' they do say as 'e can see what us can't. I don't 'old with it myself. No good never come of none of it.'

Next day I went myself to find Whillock. His cottage is a good two miles from the Vicarage. It was a lovely late September day, and I got lost in the park. It's quite easy to do this if you don't know it well, and I've been down there so seldom in late years. Instead of arriving, as I intended, at his cottage I found myself near Lady Leadon's colony of goats, and thought, as I was there, I'd have a look at them.

A Nanny and some kids were out in the field some distance from the steading, and under an oak tree near them I caught sight of a flash of scarlet. There, seated on the ground and leaning against the bole, was the 'tarrier-man,' and in his hand was a little wooden pipe like a flute. I paused behind him rather to the one side.

Without turning his head he called out: 'Don't you move, sir; you stop just where you be an' I'll show you a pretty sight.'

He put the pipe to his lips and began to play—a ghostly, thin little tune like the call of some small, shrill bird. The kids, their dappled coats lovely in the afternoon sunshine, instantly stood on their hind legs pawing the air, and then they trod a measure—a solemn, slow little dance. It wasn't gay. It wasn't, somehow, even spontaneous. It was careful, almost respectful. The mother-goat, some yards away, ceased cropping the grass and lifted her

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head to watch them, but made no attempt either to join them or interfere in any way.

The strange piping ceased. The kids dropped on all-fours and scampered away to join their mother as though released from some lesson.

The splash of faded scarlet rose from the ground and moved stiffly across the grass towards me.

'Pretty—ain't 'em?' he said, watching me closely with his unwinking, queer blue eyes that were so old and yet so keen. 'Fond of animals, ain't you, sir?'

'How do you do it?' I asked. 'They're only babies. How have you taught them?'

He shook his head, smiling his crooked, crafty smile. 'You learns a lot,' he said slowly, 'if you lives along o' the likes o' they. There's queer doin's if you looks for 'em, but them as don't look don't find nothin'. There's plenty as goes about from one year's end to another and never sees a hinch beyond their own noses, and them but shart 'uns. No; nor they can't smell neither, nor their yers can't 'ear.'

I wondered if he set me down among these incapable ones, and rather uncomfortably changed the subject.

'I was trying to find your cottage, but missed my way. They tell me you know a lot about these woods, and I'm interested in Roman remains. Do you ever come across traces of them here? Coins and so on. I wondered if you had any you could show me?'

He never took his eyes off my face, and I was acutely conscious that he was reading my thoughts.

'When I finds ow't, I leaves 'a be. "You let me alone and I'll let you alone," that's what I says to 'em, and up to now they've allus acted square. I 'aven't never sold nothin' belongin' to 'em, and I never shall. You come along, sir, and set a bit in my kitching an' I'll take it very kind—but I ain't got nothin' belongin' to them Romans. 'Twouldn't be 'ealthy for the likes o' me. "Live and let live" I says, and so they does.'

'But I thought they were all dead hundreds of years ago,' I objected, 'so I don't see how that comes in.'

'Dead!' he repeated, 'dead! What's dead? Nothin' ain't dead not reely, not if they don't want to be. Not if they ain't tired. You can't kill nothin' that be eager an' young—you can't do it. Them as wants to be peaceful lies peaceful, but whoever 'eard of youngsters as wants to lie peaceful?'

I followed him in silence, digesting this, to me, quite new view of Immortality.

Under trees and through thick undergrowth by mysterious paths did we go. Paths that looked more like the track of some animal than trodden by the foot of man, and very quickly we came out into the little clearing where the cottage stands. Loud barking greeted our approaching footsteps, and as he opened the door a little white terrier rushed out, leaping round us in noisy welcome.

Tumbledown and derelict as the cottage looked outside, inside it was tidy and almost comfortable. A plain deal table scrubbed very clean, an armchair with cushions covered with rabbit-skins neatly joined, a deer-skin before the little fireplace, and wooden racks on the walls to hold his small store of crockery, two saucepans and a frying-pan. It seemed dark in the cottage, although the sun was shining so brightly outside. The window was small and much overgrown by ivy. I sat facing it in the armchair, while he sat on a black oak coffer that was set on the other side of the fire. I had laid my hat on the table, and his ancient velvet cap was hung behind the door. The little terrier laid himself down with his nose between his paws and went to sleep in front of the smouldering fire.

It was very still.

I produced a tin of Player's Navy Cut which I'd brought as an offering to Whillock, and handed it to him.

'I'm afraid as you be disappointed as I ain't got no curiosities,' he said, and I felt his bright eyes fixed on my face, though he was so much in the shadow that I could hardly see them. 'I could a' made a lot if I'd 'a chose, scropin' about for things as they did leave, but I never done it. I 'adn't the 'eart. They got so few places now where they can stop, an' 'is lardship 'aven't never chivvied 'em. 'Eathen they was and 'eathen they stops; but they don't do no 'arm to no one, an' they keeps the place private-like. The animals don't mind 'em, so let 'em 'ave their bits o' things, I says, let 'em keep 'em in peace.'

A shadow flickered across the window, and I saw the small flat head and bright eyes of a weasel watching us, and its smooth fawn skin seemed to shine in the brighter light outside. I suppose I started slightly, for Whillock, who was busy filling his pipe, turned his head with his thumb still pressed into the bowl, and the weasel vanished.

'They 'aves their uses,' he said quietly. 'Keeper can't abear

them, but it ain't no business of mine. Live an' let live. That there weasel, 'e likes a bit o' company, times, same as you an' me.'

The little white terrier snored gently. I handed my matches to Whillock. He lit his pipe and blew out a cloud of smoke, and again it was extraordinarily still.

Again the weasel looked in at the window.

It flickered to and fro all the time I was there, for all the world like a jack-in-the-box. It gave me the creeps, for I'm like 'keeper.' I don't like weasels. Presently old Whillock began to talk:

'Now, sir, if you'll give me your word as you won't say nothin' to the Reverend, I'll show you summat as you wouldn't see once in 'undreds of blue moons. Summat as I don't believe you'd see anywhere else in England save on'y in 'is lardship's park, as 'ave bin kept so sweet and secret away from all them stinkin' engines. You come along o' me to-morrow marnin' about four o'clock an' I'll show you summat as is well worth seein'. I've a sart o' notion as you could see 'un. But there's plenty as can't. Plenty as can't.'

'Cub-hunting's begun, I suppose?' I said.

'Yes, sir, it 'ave started; but, bless you, it ain't what it used to be before the war. Why, they never meets now till ever so late—nine, half-past, sometimes ten o'clock. The gen'lemen used to think nothin' of gettin' up in the dark and ridin' out in the dark to the meets. 'Ad any 'untin' since you come down, sir?'

'No; not this time. I haven't even been to a meet since January 1919—over a year and a half ago.'

'Anything sart o' strike you, sir, when you did go?'

'Well, I suppose what must strike all of us—that the men were comparatively few, and were either middle-aged or quite young boys!'

'Ah,' Whillock said, dwelling long on the open vowel with a world of mysterious meaning in the sound 'Ah.'

His light eyes held me, and I wondered of what he was thinking. I seemed steeped in the extraordinary stillness. The weasel was staring in at us quite impudently, but I was getting used to the weasel and stared back.

Presently Whillock took his pipe out of his mouth: 'Us'll go cub-huntin' to-morrow,' he said; 'there may be a touch o' frast, but not enough to spoil the scent, and the moon be full.'

The terrier woke up and moved, caught sight of the weasel, and broke into a torrent of barks. I got up to go, and Whillock

opened the door. The terrier darted out into the wood, his barks dying away in the distance.

'Half-past four o'clock sharp, sir,' he said to me. 'Cloatley Carner I'll meet you; 'taint near so far as my little place. Good afternoon, sir. Seasonable weather for the time of year.'

He stood in the crazy door watching me out of sight.

I didn't say anything to my brother of my proposed expedition with Whillock. He doesn't altogether approve of Whillock; but, like that worthy, believes in the 'live and let live' theory.

What did the old tarrier-man mean, I wondered, by getting me up at such an unearthly hour? First he said cub-hunting was shockingly late nowadays, and then he bids me meet him at half-past four.

It was getting dark before I got back to the Vicarage, and somehow I felt rather glad to see the firelit windows of my brother's study.

I awoke, it seemed to me, in the middle of the night, though the room was quite light in the cold rays of the full moon. I had pulled up the blinds before I got into bed. I looked at my watch and it was just four o'clock. With a groan I remembered my appointment with Whillock at Cloatley Corner.

It was extremely cold, and as I crept downstairs I felt I was nine sorts of a born fool to have got up at all.

I let myself out by the side door and took the key with me. The Vicarage was wrapped in sleep and nobody stirred.

When I reached the appointed 'carner' I thought for a moment that old Whillock had played me false, and I felt crosser than ever; but as my footsteps sounded on the hard road (there had been quite a frost) he came out from a patch of black shadow, looking even smaller and more shrunken than in the previous afternoon.

His little white terrier was not with him.

'You haven't brought Fetchem,' I said.

'No, sir; 'e won't be wanted. 'E's better where 'e is.'

'Are we going in the park, Whillock?'

'No, sir; not exactly. We skirts it. 'Tis to the edge of the common we be goin' where all them garse bushes be.'

Cubs were barking in the wood, but on we padded in dead silence.

A delicate mist like a silver veil lay just above the ground; but it was brilliantly clear overhead, and a great moon flamed

blue in the heavens. We were walking now along a rough cart-track with the park fence on one side and the open common on the other.

'Is it Roman remains you're going to show me?' I asked at last, for I was getting tired of walking mumchance in a north-east wind.

He stopped. 'We'll wait here a bit, sir. No; 'tain't nothin' to do with them there Romans as I've brought you out for to see. They've bin in these parts nigh on two thousand years, so I bin told; 'twouldn't be nothin' out o' the common to see they.'

'What do you mean?' I asked. 'I should think it very much out of the common to see any of them. I should enjoy it of all things.'

''Tis a bit too cold for 'em,' he said in a matter-of-fact voice. 'Summer's the time to see them, dancin' round a himmidge like they does. But we shan't see none of 'em this marnin'. 'Tain't them as I've brought you out for to see—if you can see. You keeps quiet a minute, sir, and listen, an' I'd take off my 'at, sir, if I was you.'

He took off the lichen-coloured cap as he spoke, and I uncovered, listening intently; but all I could hear was the distant barking of young foxes and the laboured breathing of old Whillock, blown after his quick walk.

Suddenly I became conscious that there was movement everywhere around me. Wave after wave of it passed over and submerged me, the cold air brimmed and throbbed with it.

Then I saw a fox, an old dog fox, no cub he, streaking across the common at a tremendous pace. And after him the hounds running mute with their noses well off the ground, for the scent was evidently breast-high. Two old hounds were leading. The rest followed, their white and tan marking picked out sharply by the clear light; and after them the hunt, some sixty or seventy men, young men, eager and joyous, running and riding for all they were worth.

The rush of their passing stirred my hair. The soft earth, frozen only on the surface, flew in showers from under the horses' hooves. I longed to run with them, to holla', to take some part, but my voice died in my throat and my feet seemed rooted in the ground . . . and they were gone. 'Rarely, rarely comest thou, Spirit of Delight,' and it had been there, close to me, swift and keen and young . . . and it was gone.

I turned to old Whillock, who was watching me with his queer light eyes. 'You see 'em, sir?' he asked.

'Of course I saw them.'

'Young, wasn't 'em? Jolly-like, wasn't 'em?'

'Whillock,' I said, 'in God's name what was the meaning of it? Why was there no sound?'

'Why wasn't there no sound?' he repeated. 'Why, because us hasn't got quick enough ears. Some on us can see a bit farther than others, but I've not come across any yet as can 'ear—what there is to be 'eard. We'd best be getting along back, sir; we shan't see nothin' more this mornin'. Why, they'll be pretty well over to Hullasy by now.'

'But I smelt the fox, Whillock.'

'Like enough you did,—Old Charlie.'

I was cold, but not from any supernatural cause. There was only joy and thrilled enthusiasm in what I had seen, and I felt stimulated, excited, intensely interested.

'You might as well explain,' I said. 'Where did all those youngsters come from?'

'Didn't you *know* none of 'em?' he asked, with a tinge of scorn in his voice.

'I thought I did . . . but . . .'

'Folks as die old,' he said slowly, 'be glad enough to lie quiet till they be fetched. They've 'ad their bits o' fun like as not. But them lads, them as were cut off sharp and suddint-like, they wants a bit o' sport same as they did afore they was took—*an' they comes back to get it*. You look at the names in Reverend's church—thirty-five there is there; and in Siren nigh upon seventy. Good sports, too, they was, gentle an' simple; and they comes back to the countryside they knows. They loves it, bless you, and 'is lardship would never begrudge it to 'em if 'e did know, an' 'is own good 'ounds as 'e've 'unted years back and 'is father before 'en.'

'But the fox, Whillock! That fox was alive!'

'E's gettin' on, but 'e don't begrudge 'em a bit of fun; 'e knows them 'ounds 'd never 'arm 'im, but the cubs—they're young an' iggorant, they'd be that skeart. . . . Well, sir, this be my turnin', an' I 'opes as you was pleased. 'Tis a bit coldish for the time o' year, beant it? Good mornin', sir. Good mornin'.'

And the little man hobbled off round Cloatley's Corner.

ON CERTAIN FACETS OF THE CENTRAL AFRICAN NATIVES' MENTALITY.

BY HANS COUDENHOVE.

SOME fifteen years ago a gentleman, an acquaintance of a friend of mine who afterwards told me the story, went on an expedition to Karagwe, to the south-west of Lake Victoria. Here he called on the paramount chief, whom he presented, *ad captationem benevolentiae*, with a musical box. It was one of those contrivances, familiar to children of a preceding generation, where sweet melodies are produced by the turning round and round of a handle. The chief, exceedingly courteous as chiefs always are when acute hostility is absent, expressed his gratitude in a dignified manner, and, after listening for a few minutes, apparently well pleased with the beautiful sounds evoked, handed the box to one of his attendants. After an interval spent in conversation on various topics, he gave an order to a slave, who went out and quickly returned with an up-to-date gramophone, which he put down on the mat. And then, during the next half-hour, the traveller was treated to records of Melba, Caruso, de Reszke, *e tutti quanti*!

It is probable that Europeans offering advice, remedies, or instruction to natives undergo many a time, if they only knew it, some experience similar to that of the traveller when he presented his old-fashioned musical box.

Even if they have, so far, invented no machines, Negroes are just as quick-witted as we are, a statement corroborated by all missionaries. Also, although scientists still differ as to the time of their arrival in the Tropics, it is certain that they had already been settled there for many centuries when the first Europeans put in an appearance. Can we new-comers really tell them about their own countries, and the best way to exploit them, anything material that they do not know already, or that they would not have known long ago if they had been interested in the matter? And besides, how much do we know about what they know?

Many owners of plantations between the Juba and the Zambesi have admitted to me that it was neither themselves nor their European employees who were running the show, but their native overseers. And the same applies to other departments of life, and increasingly so as white settlers grow in number.

That the Negro of tropical Africa is not progressive is due neither to want of experience nor to want of judgment, for he has both, but to his temperament. But the temperament of a race is its sole characteristic which can be altered neither by education nor by legislation, as the peoples of Europe show to this day.

Few things illustrate more clearly the temperamental difference between the black man and the white than the often-quoted fact that natives, when an obstruction, in the shape, for instance, of a fallen tree, closes one of their paths, never dream of removing the obstacle, but walk around it until they have trodden out a new path, while Europeans would, as a matter of course, proceed at once to clear the way, regardless of the labour involved.

Whatever has been said and written to the contrary, Central African Negroes have not the ambition to emulate Europeans, although the vanity of some induces them to dress like white men, while others, in their desire for money, will try hard, and often with surprising success, to acquire any art which may bring about this result as quickly as possible. Ambition, however, has nothing to do with this.

European affairs appear to have only a meagre interest for them; what interests them most is to know how many black men there are in Europe, if they have got their wives with them, what kind of work they do, how much money they earn, and what their social position is, on which latter point it does not appear desirable to be too explicit in one's answers. The opinion which the generality of natives have about Europe does not indicate that those who have been in Europe and returned were as much struck by its grandeur as some Europeans believe. The prevalent idea concerning Europe is that it is crowded, that there are a great many houses, that it is very cold, and that there are plenty more diseases there than in Africa; on the latter point they are no doubt correct, a fact which is not altered by the circumstance that the limited number of African diseases so often proves fatal to Europeans.

To nothing do Burns's proverbial verses apply more justly than to the black man's opinion of the white—and perhaps *vice versa*, although it may be questioned whether the former, with his keen intuition, does not read us much more accurately than we him.

Every white man who has spent part of his life among natives must remember shocks of surprise experienced at one time or another when, owing to some hazard, he was suddenly faced with

the fact that some slight weakness, or fad, or even favourite opinion or sympathy of his—things never translated into acts and belonging entirely to the realm of thoughts—had been rightly guessed, and perhaps subtly flattered, by native acquaintances for years, without his being aware of it.

Many a European would be considerably astonished if he knew the opinion which the Negroes around him have formed concerning his person. One very rarely has the chance to watch natives mimicking, with a perfection which no white comedian could surpass, Europeans of their acquaintance. To do so is a revelation which may completely alter all one's ideas concerning them. The improvised comments on Europeans in their songs, when they do not know that they are being listened to, or when they think that the listener does not understand their language, may have the same effect.

Natives usually give nicknames to Europeans whom they know. As a rule, these are based on some special characteristic, either physical or moral, or on some peculiar habit, or on an event with which they were connected. Sometimes, also, the name given is merely an adaptation of the real name to their own language.

Readers of *Punch* will still remember a poem which appeared in that paper at the time of the late Theodore Roosevelt's African hunting trip. Its refrain was 'Bwana tumbo,' two Swahili words which, translated into English, mean 'Master Belly,' the nickname bestowed on the hunter by his native retinue on account of his *embonpoint*. A rather strict English official in Mombasa was called 'maji moto' (hot water), the name of a vicious kind of tree-ant. Oskar Bauman, the Austrian explorer who was the first to reach the Mountains of the Moon, was called 'Bwana Kivunja' (the breaker). The elephant-hunter, Neuman, who committed suicide in London, was known all over British East Africa and Uganda as 'nyama yangu' (my meat), because he insisted on always packing his meat himself when he was hunting. Another man was known as 'mwalimu' (the teacher), on account of his having prevented a carrier from crushing a beetle, the only other person in those parts who had shown similar prejudices having been a Mohammedan teacher from Zanzibar.

In the days before the war new-comers to East Africa used to be very keen on learning what nickname they had been given, and the wily Wanyamwezi and Wasukuma porters used to take advantage of this curiosity for their own aims by giving, when questioned,

such names as they thought might flatter the questioner's vanity. I have several times been told proudly by some young fellow not long out from home, 'Oh! my native name is "bwana mzuri," which means "fine master."' I had to repress a smile: I had heard it once too often, and wondered what the astonishment of the individual would very likely have been, if he had heard the appellation given him by his followers when he was out of earshot.

Some people think that the many questions which negroes put concerning Europe are a proof of the interest which they take in it. To me it would rather seem that the very nature of the majority of these queries is a proof to the contrary. Even such natives as could have had, all their lives, all the information on the subject which they wanted, if it had had the least interest for them, put questions which would be excusable only in the wildest savages from the far interior.

One man, for instance, who had for some time belonged to a mission, and who passed himself off as a Christian, asked me if 'Europe is in the water.' Another, also in Nyasaland, which is wedged in between Portuguese colonies, asked me if 'the Portuguese live with the English,' and, on my denying this, whether 'they live in Europe.' Another man asked me 'if London is a town or a mountain.' Yet the people who put these questions had lived in the midst of Europeans all their lives, and the three of them were, besides, Wayao, a tribe famous for its intelligence.

It is probable that natives, in their endless conversations, rarely talk about anything except their own affairs, either private or tribal. Anything that does not bear on these two departments of life is only of quite secondary importance to them. Their keenness to acquire manual dexterity originates solely in their desire to earn more money as artisans or as mechanics. Even those who have lived in Europe prefer to return to their own villages, and when there resume their old style of living. Of course, exceptions do occur, but they are rare. I remember a German telling me once that, when he was travelling near Arusha, he met some naked Massai who were driving cattle. One of them saluted him in German and began a conversation in the purest Berlin dialect. He had lived in that town for several years.

One would imagine that in a country like Nyasaland, where missions abound, all natives, even those who do not belong to any mission, would by now have learned to distinguish between Christmas and other festivities. Yet this is by no means the case.

Every festival, whether it is of a religious or of a secular character, is indiscriminately called a Christmas. They call a gymkhana a Christmas, and bonfires Christmas-boxes!

Although, as stated before, natives are quick at spotting the white man's peculiarities, they rarely bother as to what may be of interest or of importance to him, for the reason that what is of importance to the European frequently is of none at all to them, or *vice versa*. I have had servants in my employment for months without knowing that they had been on long journeys overland to remote countries which were of the greatest interest to me. Also it repeatedly happens that one starts on a *safari* to some distant place, with porters whom one believes to be strangers to the route one intends to take, until one discovers that a dozen or so of one's men know every inch of the road.

In Nyasaland, during the war, I had in my employ a native servant who in the past had accompanied me on a journey in German East Africa, where he himself belonged. On that journey I had been for some time the guest of a Lutheran missionary in a place called Kidugala. One day, while the war was still going on, that servant came to me with the air of one who has something of importance to communicate, and, after the inevitable preambles, he came out with the news that he had spent the preceding evening in company with some Askaris who had just returned from German East Africa; they had been in Kidugala and brought news from there. And, when he had mentioned this, he started laughing. I was keen to hear about the missionary and his family, and eagerly asked 'Well? And what is the news?' For some time he was unable to speak for laughing, and then, as I became more pressing, he blurted out 'The Askaris have eaten up all the chicken, and now there is not one left!' He had got no other news, and it had apparently never entered his head to put any questions about the family!

The most *répandue* opinion about Europeans is, that they are *wakali* (fierce), that the life or death of a native is a matter of indifference to them, and they are not quite as convinced of our honesty as we love to think. A very intelligent Nyanja, who had for some time worked in a European's workshop on a plantation, once spoke to me, quite dispassionately, though at great length, about the presents which white men occasionally make to Negroes. The gist of his speech was that these gifts are always either spoiled, or valueless, or useless to the donor—in one word, never given at a

sacrifice. It was difficult for me to contradict him—the more so as I had, a few days earlier, presented him with a Baden-Powell hat, which, although still presentable, was slightly perforated at the top.

I have been in colonies before the war, where any man engaged as porter for a caravan was referred to by other natives as having been 'caught'; and, curiously enough, the same expression was applied to children who had joined a mission.

The black man does not look upon himself as being 'inferior' to the white man in consequence of the latter happening to be top dog. Some think that he owes this advantageous situation to his more powerful 'medicine'; others, that it is 'God's will' (*Amri ya Mungu*). All are convinced that the white man's fire-arms are the chief instrument of his success. A German officer, during the Massai War in German East Africa, said complacently to a warrior who had been taken prisoner, 'You see how much stronger than you we white men are!' To which the other at once replied, 'Give us your fire-arms and take our spears, and then let us see who wins!'

A M'tahita—a tribe which lives between Voi on the Uganda railway and the Kilimanjaro—once said to me: 'Why have you white people brought us money? All the evil comes from that.' And on another occasion he asked me, 'When the white men have taken all they want out of our country, will they go away again?'

It is significant, also, how rapidly the recollection of Europeans, even of such who have lived for decades in the midst of the same tribe, fades from the latter's memory. One has the greatest difficulty, sometimes, in tracing some man or woman who remembers these individuals. Only rarely have the adults of the time looked upon the sojourn of the stranger as upon an event in itself of importance sufficient to be mentioned to their progeny, unless it happened to be connected with some event of great public importance. A few men there have been, or still are, who for this reason have acquired a kind of lasting legendary fame, as, for instance, Livingstone, or C. J. Rhodes, or Sir Harry Johnston. The following incident concerning the last gentleman is an instance how hazy the notions of the negro sometimes are.

The Mohammedanism of most Nyasaland natives who follow that creed is only skin-deep. It 'poses' them to walk about in Ramadan, draped in white clothes, and carrying in their hands a small kettle with water for their ablutions, but as to the

Mohammedan religion itself, the majority is intensely ignorant. Very few are able to reply to such simple questions as what the Prophet's name was, or his wife's, or why they face the East when they pray. Well, I happened, about a year ago, to ask one of these ostentatiously devoted and practising Moslems if he knew the name of the *Mtume* (Prophet), and he replied without a moment's hesitation, and with the triumphant air of the man who is proving to you that he is not the ignorant fellow you take him to be, 'Harry'! He was confounding the founder of Nyasaland with the founder of Islam.

On another occasion a zealous young Mohammedan asked me if the Prophet was the Son of God. I denied this, and tried to explain. He reflected for a while and then exclaimed 'Ah! *sowa sowa* (all the same), office-boy'!

Most natives, when asked whether they would like to change places with Europeans, emphatically declare that they would object to it very much.

The Negro's reticence as to his inmost thoughts is so intense that it is very difficult to form any opinion at all as to the inner workings of his mind, but on rare occasions some accidental remark may, like lightning at night, expose in a passing flash surprising vistas, which leave one wondering what may lie hidden beyond.

Once, when I was standing on a height commanding a splendid view, a Yao who was with me said 'If you pitched your tent here we should all start singing every time we looked at the country. Would not that please you?' On another occasion, on a misty morning, he said 'We are fools to-day, because we cannot see the sun!'

And when, on another day, I asked him why, on certain mornings, he did nothing but chatter and sing, and on others walk about in gloomy silence, he replied: 'Because it is not always the same. On some days everything looks white and soft.'

Once I mentioned in the presence of a Nyanja that kitchen-boys always grow fat. He at once replied: 'Because they do not think much. People who do not think much always grow fat.' The speaker was a man who, before he worked for me, had never worked for anybody else, an alphabet, who spoke only his own dialects and Swahili. He certainly never had heard me quote a word from Shakespeare, nor had he had the opportunity to hear one quoted anywhere else.

Their way of judging the actions of Europeans is often amusing

and quaintly correct. Some natives were discussing in my presence the dismissal of his fourth or fifth manager by a planter at the end of as many years. After considerable talk one of them settled the question by saying: 'It is like this. He engages them when they are poor, and then, when he sees that they have become swells (*malidadi*), he says to them, "Now you have become swells, now you must go!"'

A Yao, who knew of France only the French missionaries, asked me once if all the French wear long beards, and if the whole nation, including women and children, wear *kanzu's* (long robes). Then he asked me if the French are rich, and when I wanted to know why he put that question, he said 'They always walk slow, and they do not speak much; I think they must be poor.'

Another man once said to me: 'The Europeans always use half-crowns. I have been thinking a lot about that. Where is the other half? Is it in England?'

The forms in which shyness and bashfulness manifest themselves, even in male adult natives, are one of the most astonishing peculiarities in the Negroes', and in particular the Yao's, character. It is this perverted variety of modesty which prevents grown-up men from giving direct information, putting a direct question, or giving a direct answer.

The following is a typical instance of the shifts in which servants take refuge in order to give you some information without having to undergo the painful ordeal of themselves broaching the subject.

I was walking behind two 'boys' of mine, one of whom had been in Zomba a few days previously, when they started talking in a louder voice than usual, and in Swahili, which is not their own language. In the course of this conversation the one who had been in Zomba mentioned, first, that he had seen there Major X and Mr. Y, two gentlemen with whom he knew that I was acquainted, and then he went on to say that he had been in the 'Mandala' store, and that he had there seen a lot of bacon. I then asked him, 'Why did you not tell me that there is bacon in Zomba?' To this he replied, 'Why, have I not just told Hamiss (the other boy)?' 'Did you tell him because you wanted me to hear?' I asked.—'Yes.' 'And when you told him that you had seen Major X and Mr. Y in Zomba, did you say that also because you wanted me to get the information?'—'Yes.' 'But why did you tell Hamiss, and not me?'—'Oh! if I had told you like this, point-blank, without talking about something else first, I should have felt

ashamed (*ningaliona haya*).’ And he explained further by saying, what I knew already, ‘We black people never say a thing all at once, even among ourselves. We begin to talk about other things, and then we touch on the subject which we have in mind, and the other man asks, and *then* we say the thing we want to say.

When a leopard has carried away one of your goats the goatherd will come to you and say: ‘Master, the goat!’ To which you will probably reply: ‘Which goat?’—‘The black goat with the white legs.’ ‘Where is it gone to?’—‘It has not gone anywhere.’ ‘What is the matter with it?’—‘It has been taken away.’ ‘Who has taken it away?’—‘The leopard has eaten it.’

When, on a journey, you meet a man from the country in which you are travelling, and you tell one of your attendants to ask that man for the simplest item of information, there invariably follows an endless and most trying conversation, for no other reason than that it would be an outrage against custom and good taste to put the question simply and have done with it.

To avoid the necessity of having to give a straight answer, a native will always, whenever it is possible, reply by putting a counter-question, which, by provoking others, will finally force the questioner to ‘tumble’ to the truth himself.

This congenital aversion from straight talk also explains why servants, rather than give notice, either introduce yarns about the sudden decease of relatives or, just as often, ‘work up’ to a dismissal in a masterly fashion, so as to make themselves a nuisance without giving offence.

When you see in a native’s face that he wants something—he is past master in mutely expressing things—and you ask him what it is that he wants, he invariably replies ‘Nothing,’ and then, in the course of conversation, he comes forward with his request as if by accident.

On the other hand it must be stated that tact plays a great part in the native’s reserve; he has, indeed, infinitely more tact than the average white man, and strictly avoids in conversation all subjects liable to evoke painful recollections or feelings. That people with so much tact are also exceedingly polite follows as a matter of course. The Sultan Mariale of the Wadshagga once served me with *pombe* in his double-story house on the Kilimanjaro, and I unfortunately broke the tumbler. He immediately seized my hand and thanked me effusively, as if, by breaking the glass, I had conferred upon him an exquisite favour!

To pick up a thing which another man happens to drop is not part of the code of politeness of the native as it is of the white man. But the native who will not even pretend at the faintest attempt to stoop when you have accidentally dropped your pocket-book or your tobacco-pouch at his very feet, will, a moment later, when preceding you on a path, suddenly pluck a leaf from a tree and rush ahead to remove, by daintily picking it up, the dropping of a bird !

The negro's reticence and the difficulty which many Europeans encounter when they try to enter into the spirit of native phraseology, even if they can correctly translate the words, are jointly the cause of much unpleasantness. Some Europeans will persist in giving to words meanings which they never had. There is, for instance, the word '*ndio*,' which, in talking to natives, almost all Europeans, from the Juba to the Zambesi, use as 'Yes.' But it does not mean 'yes' at all. Its correct translation is 'So it is.' Incessant misunderstandings are the consequence of this wrong interpretation. For instance, if you say to your cook 'There are no more eggs?' and he replies '*Ndio*,' he means 'So it is'—that is, that there are no more eggs. But the nine Europeans out of ten who imagine that '*ndio*' means 'yes,' will take the reply to be 'Yes, there are,' and when they find out afterwards that there are none they will tax the cook with lying, and when he swears that he did not lie they will come to the conclusion that he is one of the most obstinate liars whom they ever met.

That explanations and argumentations of natives always appear to begin at the wrong end may be due to some structural peculiarity of the brain, and that the syntax of the Bantu languages follows on similar lines perhaps derives from the same cause. Thus much confusion is caused from the fact that the object is always made to precede the subject. As an example, the Swahili sentence '*Mafaranga wanayakula madudu*?' runs, translated into English, word for word, thus: 'The chicken (*mafaranga*) do they eat them (*wanayakula*) the insects (*madudu*)?' But the real meaning of the sentence in Swahili is 'Do the insects eat the chicken?' I once put this question where I saw a lot of ants running about among the chicken, and received the surprising reply: 'Not unless they are dead'!

The general attitude of the black man towards the white is one of profound distrust. To this rule there are two exceptions: British officials are trusted everywhere, and so are the missionaries

in long-established missions, where a sort of family relationship between the missionaries and their pupils and followers has in time developed. For this distrust natives can scarcely be blamed, for in the past they have only too often been the prey of unscrupulous speculators, a subject on which many volumes could be written.

One not generally known and rather peculiar way in which this distrust against strangers manifests itself is the care they take to hide their footpaths from a new arrival in their district. This applies chiefly to footpaths in the jungle, on mountain-sides, and in the forest, in districts without settlers. They fear that the traveller might discover something which may induce him to stay. Not until it has become quite clear to them that he means to remain anyhow, do they give up their reticence, occasionally with surprising revelations. But even months after one's arrival one may discover well-trodden short cuts through apparently inextricable wilderness, well known but kept secret by the natives in the neighbourhood. A favourite trick is, where native paths through jungle branch off from a main road, to leave a small patch of jungle standing where path and main road would intersect, if they were allowed to meet, so as to prevent passers-by from guessing at its existence. Very frequently also the inhabitants will swear that, although paths have existed, they have become impassable owing to the spread of *liquania*. As a rule these statements are much exaggerated, but it cannot be doubted that in some places the *liquania* is planted by the natives themselves for the very purpose of creating an obstruction. It may be mentioned here that this plant is a creeper with a pod of beautiful reddish-brown velvet. The slightest touch or breath of wind sends the down of these pods flying, causing unbearable itching where it comes into contact with the skin. The creepers climb trees to any height and in any number.

The most effective safeguard against identification of which the Nyasaland native disposes is the number of names which each man possesses. The name which he bears as a child is dropped at *uniago* (initiation), and to call him by it after this is over is a deadly insult. His father then gives him a name by which he is known in the tribe. Besides this name, he chooses another himself, chiefly to be used in his relations with Europeans. This is the name which in most cases is entered in his pass-book at the Residency. Frequently these names are perfectly idiotic, as, for instance, 'Whisky' or 'Breakfast' or 'Dinner' or 'Whiskers,' and so on ;

and they are not always communicated to all the other members of the family.

Once an old man came into my camp and asked for his son, giving a name which I had never heard. After he had, at my request, described the man he was in search of, I came to the conclusion that it must be my cook, who had cooked for me as 'Tim' for the last two years, and whose pass-book also held that name. The old fellow, however, had never heard of Tim. But when Tim was called, the two turned out to be father and son all right.

These names, *ad usum Delphini*, are often changed, sometimes by an employer, when he finds that he already has sufficient bearers of that particular name on his hands, sometimes by the owner of the name himself, occasionally on the spur of the moment, when he is not quite certain of his environment, and thinks that an alibi may eventually prove useful.

That under such circumstances, and given, in addition, the *esprit de corps* which binds all natives together, the police should ever succeed in catching anybody, seems an almost superhuman task. Yet they are remarkably successful.

Unofficially, natives make, racially, only one sweeping distinction between the fair-haired, fair-skinned, usually somewhat taller Europeans of the North (in which are included the South African Dutch) and the more swarthy and usually smaller-sized Europeans of the Mediterranean basin. The South African mulattoes, whose acquaintance the native of British Central Africa made during the war, were, and are still, designated by him as 'bushmen.'

Although they may have a great deal of tribal patriotism, the Negroes of East and Central Africa are, as subjects of European Governments, entirely devoid of patriotism as we understand it, with the exception, perhaps, of some of the Askaris. But I imagine that the latter's patriotism is more of the *j'appartiens à mon maître* kind, than sentimental.

During the war I had for a year in my service a Yao from German East Africa, a most amusing fellow. He had been a German soldier and, as such, had been wounded in the right foot, taken prisoner, and cured in an English hospital. As soon as he was cured he enlisted as a British soldier, fought bravely against the Germans, was again wounded, this time in the left thigh, but, fortunately for him, picked up again by the British, cured, and dismissed as an invalid.

He was equally proud of both performances, and was con-

stantly throwing about, true veteran fashion, with his 'compagnie' and his 'battalion,' alternately using German and English commando words, mentioning different marches and battles, now on one side, now on the other, all extremely bewildering to the listener, as one never knew whom he happened to be fighting against on each particular occasion. The idea that anybody might see something objectionable in a soldier thus changing sides as in a quadrille never entered his head. I understood his idea to be that, with the moment of his being wounded, all moral obligation on his part towards the side on whose behalf he had received the wound came to an end.

As may be imagined, many different versions were current among natives as to the origin of the war between the 'Wangreza' and the 'Wagermaan' or 'Wadatshi,' the most fantastic explanations being, of course, those which were most readily believed. One favourite and widely spread story was, that the son of the 'Sultan' of the English had owned a white mule, and the son of the 'Sultan' of the Germans a black one, that they quarrelled over the merits of their respective mounts, and that the war between the peoples followed as a consequence. This explanation shows, by the way, how the contact with Europeans has impressed upon the native mind the importance of sportive issues. Not one of those who believed this yarn appeared to be in the least surprised that torrents of blood should have been shed in consequence of the two princes' rivalry.

The great bloodshed, however, did not find as universal approval as one might have expected among savage and, for the most part, warlike races. There was another rumour current that, at a certain place, a great many sheets of paper were picked up on the ground, which missives had been thrown from heaven, and on which the iniquity of so much killing was denounced in Arabic, and terrible visitations prophesied as a retribution. According to the wizards these visitations were to take the form of a fearful heat-wave, by which the Europeans would be forced to take refuge on their ships; lions would infest the whole country, and the natives would be reduced to living in the trees like monkeys!

If natives make scarcely any distinction between Europeans racially and unofficially, those who have had the opportunity to compare different methods of administration in colonies belonging to different Powers distinguish all the more, and it will be a matter of small surprise to those Europeans who have had the same

opportunity, to hear it stated that no native race exists which does not prefer British rule, *suaviter in modo* if *fortiter in re*, to all others. They feel, even if they express it differently, that the British authorities are *de relation sûre*. Nothing is more distasteful to Negroes than startling innovations, and they know that they are safest from these under the British Government, which, as far as the African native is concerned, 'lets well alone' always, and 'sleeping dogs lie,' as long as there is not a probability of their getting too dangerous when they wake up.

A Colonial Power, with centuries of experience like the British, would never have committed such a blunder as did the Government of German East Africa, when, a few years before the war, it decreed that all adult male Massai should be earmarked! The Massai were then, as they perhaps still are, cattle thieves as incorrigible as were the Highlanders of the Waverley novels; like the latter, they looked upon cattle-thieving as an honourable profession, and death in its pursuit was to them, as it was to the Highlander, next best to death on the battle-field. In order to put an end to these ever-recurring cattle raids, control of individuals was a necessary condition, and so the German authorities devised a scheme by which every Massai warrior should be registered by means of a tiny metal disc in the top of his ear. There was no cruelty or brutality intended or implied in the application. As a matter of fact, since the end of their rebellions, the Massai had always passed as being petted by the German Government *au détriment* of other native races. The authorities argued, with some show of reason, that to men who are in the habit of wearing ivory snuff-boxes four inches in diameter in their ear-laps, an additional tiny metal disc in the top of the ear would be either a matter of indifference or perhaps even be looked upon as an improvement.

But the wizards who devised this plan, if they did not overrate the Massai ear's carrying capacity, certainly underrated its owner's sense of pride. I was living at the time among the Massai in British East, and I remember how terrible was the indignation of their brethren across the boundary. They said that they were being earmarked like their own cattle, and never forgave the offence, as they have amply proved at the outset of the war.

This preference of natives for British rule, although flattering, was, in pre-war days, sometimes a cause of embarrassment to British Colonial Governments. It happened frequently that chiefs whose territory lay near the British frontier, but outside it, crossed

the boundary with their household and followers, in the intention to settle in the British colony. One of the most important events of this kind was when, in 1905, the Sultan of the Wadschagga, Mariale, arrived in Nairobi, where Sir Donald Stewart, the Governor, was then residing, with all his followers. For diplomatic reasons, out of courtesy to its neighbours, the British Government had to discourage these attempts. So it happened in this case also, and Mariale was persuaded, by the joint efforts of Sir Donald and of the German Governor, Count Götzen, who just at the same time happened to pay a visit to his English colleague, to return to the Kilimanjaro.

It is an ill wind that bears no one any good. If Mariale is still alive, he and other chiefs who have encountered the same disappointment can say to themselves that, as far as they are concerned, that most elusive of all elusive proverbs, 'Everything comes to him who waits,' has for once come true.

MOUNTAINEERING AND ITS PROPHETS.

It would appear that among civilised races those popular pursuits survive longest which offer the least probability of complete satisfaction in their attainment. The dead languages have for centuries headed our educational hunt, because the fine craving for truth, which we call scholarship, can rarely extract from a dead word or phrase any such draft of living, contemporary meaning, as would drown its desire in exactitude. The Arts, those eternal quarries, elude our perfect understanding, or expression. The nearer we seem to apprehend them in imagination, the more conscious we become of our inability to imprison them in any final form. In religion, philosophy—any name we may give to that most intimate hunt after supernatural truth—our enthusiastic chase endures endlessly: the finite cannot overtake the infinite. It is no matter for regret. The overtaking of any complete truth deprives action and thought of one good stimulus. Our pursuit, and hard-believing, have then to be diverted on to the trail of some other uncertainty—something which still demands imaginative effort for its discovery, still offers some intellectual pleasure in its difficult credence. The chase after animals retains its wide, primitive interest; and we notice that, as the chances of viewing any particular type of game, or of missing the beast when found, vary, our interest in that branch of sport fluctuates correspondingly. Similarly, the abiding appeal of 'Games' for us lies in the fact that a game has no real end. For a games player every match is a continuation of the last, a prelude to the next. The result of a single day's play is no more than a proclamation of the momentary state of an interminable score—a score which continues from field to field and season to season, until the powers fail, or the last whistle pipes the enthusiast off the ground, still playing!

Mountaineering is yet another of these human hunts. As a quarry it has been at different times classed with the creeds, pursued with the arts, and viewed among the sports. It is as profitless to seek to label it as it would be to make comparison between all the hunting instincts of our mind—to seek to contrast, for instance, in their relation to a perfect hunting instinct, our desire to discover the effects upon time of kinks in space with our

passion to experience the effects of rock-angle upon muscle and imagination. Of only importance is it that we do possess such unsatisfiable cravings. They supply our principal incentive for keeping alive; they provide us at once with the power and the provocation. The hunger-chases of the body, for food and for love, may make indeed remaining alive possible; but of themselves they would leave life too unexciting to be worth prosecuting after the first complete capture of a food-truth, as represented by a single over-satisfying meal, or of such docile felicity as is secured by an appropriate alliance. It is the hunts to satisfy our thought, imagination, and activity which maintain our interest in living. And of all the speculative quarries mountaineering is the most elusive. Its magnificent never-endingness should ensure its survival among the last of the human hunts. Its only rival is likely to be that even more historic chase after a spiritual explanation of everything in the universe which we cannot expect, rationally, to understand. In games, in learning, in excursions after artistic sight and musical sound, we know, vaguely, what end we are pursuing; their persistent charm is limited to the uncertainty and difficulties which postpone that end. But in mountaineering we do not even know what end, or which end of what end, we are chasing. According to our early prophets we are hunting a trail double from the start: this alternative is labelled Adventure or Romance; that, Health or Sport. And yet, as creatures of a dual nature, we find we cannot run with our bodies in the one trail without hurrying with our minds along the other. If then, in spite of the prophets, it is after all a single, confused trail, can we be sure that even this is anything more than the projection across an inanimate landscape of our desire for some sort of chase, romantic or sportive?—the fashioning out of fancy and our sense of beauty of some imaginary quarry? Starting in such a mist of happy puzzlement, as to our route, we are little likely to get much nearer towards an explanation of the nature of the object we are pursuing. With no prospect, therefore, of ever being satisfied, illuminated, and consequently disappointed, we would seem, as mountaineers, to have discovered the Ideal Quest—an appeal to our common instinct so strong that no later generation will be able to discredit our own hopeless passion by forsaking its pursuit, with a quarry ahead so elusive that no fortuitous capture is ever likely to deprive the human race of one of its most enduring encouragements to remaining alive and alert. For mountains may satisfy us for a season with

their romance or our own activity ; but the end of mountaineering is not the getting to the top of mountains. Nor is it the climbing safely down again—although both are pleasant incidents, of which the planning and the accomplishment recur with desirable frequency during our pursuit. A completed voyage is only a milestone in a seaman's life ; and to have clapped his net over an idea is barely an interruption in a philosopher's thinking. To a mountaineer the ascent of a hill is only an incident. The seeing and thinking about hills are other incidents. All taken together, such incidents give no mountaineer any undue sense of repletion. Our prophets can but mislead us then, if they confront Lochmatters with Ruskins—if, according to their temperament, they define the true mountaineer at one time as the man who feels the charm of hills from their feet ; at another, he who feels it for sixteen hours on rock and ice with his hands ; at yet another, he who sits with his toes to the study fire through the evening hours and feels it *only beating in his heart*. The perfect mountaineer, one who can convince not only himself but the next generation that he knows all there is to know about mountains, has never existed. We may say with confidence that he will be evolved simultaneously with the perfect man—whose appearance will signalise the end of the world. For to overtake the meaning of the mountaineering spell, of the bond between the hills and ourselves, will mean no less than to have mastered the secret of the universe, the relationship between matter and spirit. Happily, all the true mountaineers yet imagined lag still too far behind this ideal to discourage any little one of us from starting out up the next little hill we see, with the old undiminished hope of yet heading the hunt, of experiencing a novelty of sensation, a new thrill of provocation, not only hitherto undescribed, but, probably, humanly indescribable.

Mountains are large and actual incidents in our mountaineering quest ; they are also symbols of as complex a character as our own living personalities. Human nature must have its symbols for its ideas ; and symbols to be emotionally effective must suggest a life of their own, sympathetic both with our physical and metaphysical requirements. We cannot have a living religion without a personal revelation ; and we cannot live our belief in it without a continuous effort which is as much physical as mental. An abstract idea as a symbol is inadequate ; and memory soon falsifies that which it has assembled for veneration only from report. We could not be enthusiastic about an abstract game. Its appeal

must be felt through some form of mental and physical concentration on our own part, such as our more or less reverent and successful pursuit of a bouncing ball. On the other hand, symbols too concrete, or simple, such as have no life—idols, images, and the like, even of supernatural ideas—are apt in our generation to appeal only to our sense of humour. Here and there, it is true, the semblance of living force seems to have been transmitted successfully to dead matter or colour by the strange alchemy of genius. The greatest of statuary lives for us emotionally by reason of that transfusion. But we notice at once that those figures seem the most alive, the most inspired, the most tenacious of our reverence, where the forms are primitive or formally suggestive; or where the genius of such a one as Michelangelo, recognising the limitations of expression possible in a dead material, has been content to leave the symbol itself unrounded and incomplete; so that the thought, the emotion, which it interprets, bursts from the rude vastness of limbs with a grandeur of animated suggestion such as any further imprisoning of the idea beneath a greater perfection of surface could only serve to conceal. The test of effectiveness in a symbol is the persistence of the feeling of reverence which it provokes in the human mind. Without reverence no curious admiration, no human hunt after an ideal can endure for long. To create it, the symbols must be visible, material; to maintain it, they must be humanly, or at least emotionally, alive.

Mountains are the greatest of these inspired symbols, for they are endowed with a dual principle of life more enduring and more impressive than any which human genius can lend. They are actual and material: we could not be pursuers of mountaineering without tangible mountains. They are also incomparable nurseries—we may almost say churches—of imaginative thought. They offer an environment, an atmosphere, in which those whose thought demands evident life as the emblem of spiritual presence can feel most nearly the fluctuations of natural law, the ebb and flow of infinite varieties of beautiful existence. Morally, they are exciting, because they point surprisingly and perpetually upward in a world of flat, falling and little things. Aesthetically they are satisfying, an uplifting on to an easy plane of sight of novel harmonies in colour and form. But they are, and they mean, both as material and spiritual evidences, much more. When we have measured with our fingers and our toes and our lungs their actual forces, when we have held in our eyes the suggestions shadowed by their

vivid shapes, when we have wakened among them to the impressions, and still more to the nameless sensations which attend the quickening of the blood, the stimulus of air, the widening of sight and the deepening of vital consciousness—then, too, we become aware of the presence of some subtler affinity, of new and yet somehow familiar currents of emotion which are moving almost passionately between ourselves and our mountain surroundings. We might be right to call the attraction of hills magnetic; for it may not be fantastic to attribute it to the presence, in larger mass, among mountains of the same potent principle of life which inspires our own dual personalities. The irresistible appeal of the hill for us may, after all, be but this, drawing to itself—in our pursuit—its lesser like. But, as an explanation, magnetism is no more intelligible than mysticism. Of this more intimate aspect of our relationship with mountains it may be perhaps less irritating to common sense to say that many of us who climb can become reasonably convinced that the mountains focus for us, in a form small enough to be humanly perceptible, large enough to remain full of awe, the action and the effects of undefined forces creative and destructive; that they interpret for us laws of motion and of rhythmic order too great and too gradual for us to grasp, too great even for snow and ice and rock and water and wind to express in any but disrupted forms; and that they suggest to us a shadowing of a yet deeper design which inspires both their existence and our own, assigning to them their larger, as to us our lesser, portion in space and time, in order and in expression. Emotionally, as might be expected, the effect of symbols of this complex nature is even more bewildering. Among the magnified forms of hills, their exaggerated illustration of the forces of growth and inspiration which animate the universe, we grow more sensible of the action of cognate forces within ourselves. The sympathy thus established between our senses and the mountain atmosphere makes us often vitally conscious of the momentary identification of our organism with its environment. Since the life of a human identity is not limited to the changes in its own isolated organism, but persists no less in the relation of the organism to its environment, it is comprehensible that these magnifying symbols of the mountains may enable human beings who are peculiarly sensible to their environment to experience moments of vivid conscious communion, not only with the kindred evidences of beauty, power, and order immediately encompassing them, but moments of conscious relation-

ship with the suggestions of remoter purpose, or of spiritual unity, underlying and animating alike the existence of man and mountain, rock and mind.

The attraction of mountaineering, therefore, it may be objected, is something transcendently vague—so vague that the hills themselves fall to pieces in their attempt to interpret it. As a description of our present understanding the summary is not unjust: a confused and joyous humility must be the state of mind of any man who has frequented the mountains, who has felt the magnetism of height in his emotions, in his intelligence, and in his muscles, and who notes and records his mountaineering impressions honestly. It is useless to contend that all mountaineers do not feel these disturbing sensations. They all do, or—they would not go back to the hills! Most of us dislike emotion so much—unless it be standardised emotion, love or gaiety or irritation—that we shun its admission, and avoid even formulating our own feelings to ourselves. But if ever we sit down to think about, or still more to write about, our days in the hills, the comprehensible things which we did and saw are troublesomely invaded by a host of incomprehensible things which we felt. An old and shy convention may advise us, in our records, to be ‘classic,’ humorous, or agreeably didactic. But we are not honest, even in our own eyes, if we crisply set down as adventurous ‘sport’ something which appealed almost uncomfortably to our sense of reverence, the compartment we kept for our religious beliefs; if we subdue, as incidental ‘romanticism,’ aspects of a pursuit which challenged at every turn our aggravated intelligence; or if we genially suppress, as pathetic fallacies, as fancies of our over-cultivated imagination, those currents of instinctive sympathy, of which we are most sensible when we are most animal, most physically harmonised, most empty of any consciousness save that of the delightful action and reactions of our bodily strength.

Mountaineers, who form a light-hearted, heterogeneous congregation of schismatics, make their responses as and where they like, in the course of their active mountain service. There are so many of them that it matters little if a number sleep through each other’s sermons, and the doxology. But from men who write about mountains, who expound them publicly, more may be expected. The longer we frequent the hills, the more we question the ingenuousness of any record which does not suggest to us, by its tone as much as by its statements, that among the mountains, through

the infinite appeals which they make to imagination, vision, and vitality, a man is brought into contact with forces greater than himself, yet akin to his own, and with disturbing evidences, at least, of profounder design. A chronicler has been deceiving himself, as well as us, if his recitals fail to leave us with the impression that these mountain symbols have seemed to him, too, to be crystallising instants of some cosmic rhythm, to be writing up, on rock-wall and ice-slope, detached, magnified syllables of an almost spiritual message.

Mountaineering has not existed as a force in the world for more than two generations. By a discovery, which we may claim as the greatest which it had been reserved for civilised man to make, a group of Victorian gentlemen were enabled to reveal a new and unknown force for good, and only for good. Of what other modern discovery can this be said? Steam, electricity, explosives, levitant machinery—all of them in their application only conversions to human ends, and therefore 'symbols' like the mountains, of forces unknown—of which of them can we say that it has contributed only to a greater happiness, that it has not proved rather the enemy than the friend of privacy, originality, and beauty? Railways, telephones, newspapers—they have noisily bartered our pleasant mosses of experience and character for a big rolling-stone of collective and competitive commonplaceness. Mountains, expressions of similar forces, symbols also that can serve us as a training-ground for the new impulses which they have revealed, are by contrast wholly beneficial. Mountaineering can contribute only to the development of personality, to the increase of our social idealism, and to the better individual understanding and investment of our small separate inheritances of human contentment.

It was fortunate that the discovery of mountaineering was made in the Victorian era and by the omniscience of the intellectual Victorians. The new forces that were insurgent in the human mind and throughout the civilised world were then still in their narrow and seemingly dirigible commencement. In so far as they were yet explicable they were being passed through the funnel of these same masterful, critical intellects. Dictators of thought and arbiters in the arts of living, each with his own confident bias, scientific, artistic, clerical or agnostic, the majority were prophets of note in other spheres of learning and speculation, and they were free to select or reject what they chose as a subject for their proclamation. We owe it to them that they recognised and

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acclaimed, at its almost imperceptible beginning, the river of service to mankind which might spring from the new source of inspiration revealed to them among the mountains. By their writing and by their personalities they lent to its proclamation an impulse and a weight which ensured its welcome by all cultivated minds; and they set upon the practice of mountaineering a seal of distinction such as it could never have received had the revelation been delayed until these later days of specialised writing, sectional leadership in thought, and popular mistrust of dictation of every kind, whether it be in our active living, our individual thinking, or even in our hoping. As we grow older, and realise more and more the part which our mountaineering has played in the establishment of our own philosophy of a working life, we find that more and more frequently do we return to the shelf which contains these limpid, almost impersonal stories, 'Peaks, Passes and Glaciers,' early Mont Blanc ascents, and their indiscriminating like. The best of them are now our grateful classics. We take refuge among them, from modern monographs on sport or speculation, with much of the reaction with which we fly to the shelf of Anthony Trollope after those most enervating of all travel experiences, the long, enforced contemplations of bookstall post-war fiction—infantile transatlantic sentimentalism and improprieties so drab that they would put a Dean to sleep.

And yet, even among the prophets, we have all probably our preferences. And in idle moments our critical habit will seek to hunt down the reasons for our likings, and to make private distinctions between what may seem to us the permanently true and the no more than temporarily correct. The writings of the earliest mountaineers have this merit: they rarely fail to give the impression that they are delivering a message simple and universal in character. They seldom, if ever, attempt to exploit the position of a climbing prophet to the writer's personal glorification; and circumstances—and the parochialism of later Climbing Clubs—could not tempt them to suppressions or adjustments such as are now designed to adapt the individual message to the prejudices of already existing schools of thought, rock-climbers, winter-snow sportsmen, topographical sub-alpinists, and their many alternatives. The great message of the mountains was originally spoken—and speaks still—to all men who love mountains and who are in sympathy with all other men who love mountains; and only in a similar humility of mind, and with sympathy of feeling, can it be

still equally understood or enjoyed. Some of us, therefore, may find all we need of dogma in Leslie Stephen ; some in Ruskin, in Tyndall, or in Moore. And yet some of us, or I may be singular, miss something in them all. I have already indicated it as the atmosphere of an admission that in the mountains man is up against forces greater than himself, subject to emotions a little incomprehensible. Insistence upon the feeling of awe or of reverence would, of course, be tiresome ; but while a man must be human, and may be even jocose, in a cathedral, for him to discourse continuously as if the building had no other atmosphere than that of a heap of stones, jars an auditor's sense of fitness. We feel that the prophets all felt the atmosphere, as we do ; and we know that in matters of sensation no two men feel, or describe their feeling, quite alike. In discussion with men of a different generation, younger or older, we become even more conscious of this divergence ; we seem, at best, to be looking at the same object through different eyes of the same field-glass, and only occasionally are we conscious, in the course of conversation, that this blurring of the image is removed and that the vision has become identical. But the Victorians stand still too near us in time for any misleading of altered language to have crept between us. We can still put our minds in close contact with theirs, not only in their mountaineering papers but in their other writings ; and, making every allowance for individual temperament, the suspicion will return that, although they felt as we do under the influence of similar mountain happenings and similar atmospheres, they preferred, consciously or unconsciously, to make a selection of what they should express—and of what they should suppress. They were as highly cultivated a body of men as ever became associated in a common pursuit : they had a clear field, free of all commitments, clean of all prejudice, with nothing but themselves, the hills and the truth to consider. And if they did indeed choose to omit from the rounded narratives and the neat ordering of sensations one aspect, almost one oppression of the mountains, to us the most dominant and interesting, it is impossible entirely to acquit them—however sympathetically we may understand their motive.

The epoch of the Victorian intellectuals was, in its kind, unique. It flourished at a crisis in the social and industrial development of the world which can never recur ; and it will remain as singular a phenomenon as was that of the great age of Greek culture, which blossomed at the moment of perfect balance in the growth of

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Western civilisation, when the human body and the human mind had reached, simultaneously, the culmination of their flower period of childhood. For the Victorian all knowledge was still classifiable; and learning and discovery alike were accepted as necessarily contributing towards a general human betterment—subject to the sagacious ordering of the educated mind. To such omniscience the suggestion must be intolerable that there could be forces, impulses, complicated semi-physical, semi-psychic spheres—one may not say unknowable, for theirs was not an assumption of omnipotence—but not definable, capable of clear allocation into reasonable compartments. Herbert Spencer's rounding-off of the world, known and unknown, in a single completed system is indicative of the attitude of mind. We have only to picture the group of these men, congregated at such centres of criticism—as the two great Universities, suspicious of any irregular emotion, any irrationality, in one another, modestly conscious of their collective competence—as only young men can be—and of their vocation as the leaders of thought, and we can imagine for ourselves what was likely to be the effect upon them when they chanced upon that greatest discovery which intellectuals unaided have ever made! Almost by accident they had stepped out of the doors of their quiet academic lodgings, and found themselves in a country as unexplored as the Poles or the Sahara, as full of unwritten romance as 'Marco Polo' or 'The Arabian Nights' of their boyhood's reading! With a single stride they, the men of thought, had outdistanced the whole generation of the sportsmen and the adventurers, had opened up a region, in the untrodden world of the Alps, which the artists were ready to proclaim as a new universe of beauty, and had founded a sport, an outlet for manhood, so gratifying in its technique, so revolutionary in its rewards, that it surpassed anything which the athletic division of humanity had succeeded in evolving during centuries of experiment! They were, of course, not only an exceptionally able, but an exceptionally gallant and accomplished group, masters of living as well as of thinking. In them the clear flame of adventure burned none the less brightly because their education had voluntarily subordinated such enthusiasms to their pursuit of learning and to the service of the public good. Essentially modest, humorously proud, a little surprised at themselves and their surroundings, they could exult in their new corner of freedom like boys let out of school unexpectedly. Of one thing only were they supremely confident—that intellectually at least

they were equal to the occasion. Physically, they might be content to trust to, and to applaud with heroic humility, the peasants who assisted them up these new ways; but for their trained and confident intelligence what could this pleasing corner of colours and shapes, this chance outlet for the less important half of the energies of *homo sapiens*, offer that should not be easily comprehensible and classifiable? When, therefore, they sat down to share their pleasure with the world, both training and conviction made it impossible for them to treat of the new experiences and impressions as more than an extension of familiar experience, or a new form of relaxation. They might deprecate in their own case the attribution of all knowledge, but it was inevitable that they should assume their ability to determine into which compartments all new knowledge must be fitted. The world might hold fresh facts, it could not disclose novel or unrelated forces incapable of rational classification. Between the ruled lines of the synopsis, under one of the headings admissible as subjects suitable for the Victorian curriculum, this new matter must go—to be labelled Refreshment, Physical Exercises, Nature Study, or Practical Science, accordingly as the writers were graduates in the Humanities or in the Sciences. Their usual preference is indicated by the titles they selected for the prophetic books—‘Playground of Europe,’ ‘Hours of Exercise,’ ‘Vacation Rambles,’ and the like.

Once we have grasped this attitude, and its origin, and made the necessary allowances, the sincerity of their records makes it not difficult for us to follow them more closely between the lines of their ‘vacations’ in the Alps; and to sympathise with the secret questionings, the unintentional admissions, which betray their encounters with the impracticable forces and the emotional insurgences, with whose reactions longer intercourse with the great mountains has now made us familiar. Under the holiday writing, the glacial controversies, a consciousness of novel sensation becomes at times perceptible, almost as puzzling and as persistent as our own. But who was to be the first to admit bewilderment—to submit the inexplicable to the machinery of University criticism and the incredulity of a confident, intellectual renaissance? There is no writing which recreates for us more actually or more poetically the beauty of the hills, and the sensations which we have felt among them, than certain passages in the ‘Alps in Winter’ and in the ‘Regrets of a Mountaineer.’ And it is just because of his pellucid, atomised thinking, his fascinating art of exposition, the blend of

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tenderness and irony that, 'half-suspected, animates the whole,' the demonic dexterity with which his mind plays an intellectual battledore and shuttlecock with the emotions with which it delights impishly to sport, while it is too honest to let them fall to the ground, that Leslie Stephen is pre-eminent among the early prophets; and that he affords us at the same time a supreme example for our curious if admiring investigation. We can almost hear him as he writes: "Aesthetic impulses"?—what am I saying? Quick!—the Artistic drawer—Ruskiniana—that's it! "Emotional quickenings, subliminal sympathy"?—brrr!—sentimentality! Rousseau, of course!—and what a terrible drawer I was almost in!—impropriety in the very pink of the cotton-wool lining! "The call of the unknown"?—dear me, where's that tiresome pigeon-hole labelled "Aneroids and Professor Tyndall"? The "challenge to manhood and the sharpening of the senses"?—an easy one!—where's the docket "Sport"?—or wait!—some of it under "Walking," for I find myself that the unconscious rhythm of the legs, over flat surfaces, is the best accompaniment to thinking—that is, rational thinking! "Affinities, instinctive responses, part-visual, part-tactile, part-sensuous communications"?—what *am* I saying!—where's that wastepaper-basket—"Transcendentalism"! And now, to clear our minds after that, let's have a joke about food or temper, or the Ten Commandments!' And clear the air he does, with an incomparable presence of wit and a literary tact that sets us all laughing again with relief! For really it was a near thing. His memory had almost led us over the safe Victorian edge, in spite of himself. Indeed there are passages where the rescue has come just too late! Others of the greater prophets can be read, edifyingly, in the same light, and to the same effect. But our assumption, or argument if it be one, can be justified more succinctly by our asking ourselves suddenly at this point why we prefer Edward Whymper's 'Scrambles' to them all. It is no detraction from Whymper's undoubted talent to say that he was inferior to some of his fellow-prophets in knowledge, in sensitiveness, in imagination, and in style. Much of his informative matter might be expected to be boring to youth; with much of his book as a work of art our later criticism can find fault. And yet, there are very few works upon a single and rather esoteric subject which old and young alike can continue to read with such unflagging enjoyment. His secret is his veracity, the feeling he gives us that it is all just happening to ourselves. He does not select; he is incapable of suppression.

We feel the conflict, the obstinacy of the man ; but we feel also the reality of the forces against him. There at last we have it. A flashlight picture, in unconsciously correct proportion, of the personal force in conflict with the tremendous forces of its new environment. It is the relationship with the hills, a contact sympathetic yet hostile, of which we ourselves are most conscious when we become mountaineers ; and which, even when we read of it before we have started on our own adventures, touches a deep responsive chord. Whymper is not self-conscious ; he is incapable of regarding himself as an abstraction ; he gives us only the concrete incidents of his struggle with mountain forces. We have the life-like presentation of a flinty mountain and a steely Whymper in continuous concussion, the whole illuminated by the firework of sparks which they strike out of one another. When his impressions become too big or too intimate for his pen, unlike more subtle prophets, he cannot take refuge in some tranquillising jest or rational reflection. He bullocks into the confusion which his honesty has evoked ; and its extent is made plain to us by the noise of the things falling about him in his charge. He might be called an egotistical writer ; but nowhere in mountaineering literature do we receive such an impression of the unendingness of the mountaineering quest or of the insignificance of the individual success in comparison with it. Leslie Stephen can give us a shock of unreality by climbing—when he is hard pressed by his sensations—into his ‘Sports compartment,’ and saying ‘Still, it is strictly sport—as strictly as cricket, or rowing, or knurr and spell. The game is won when a mountain-top is reached ; it is lost when one is forced to retreat!’—a definition, however, which he rejects himself just as often as it suits him. But Whymper hardly for a page lets us feel that getting to the top of a mountain is more than an incident : perhaps he will treat it as a two-line introduction to the description of a panorama, or perhaps he will only mention the ascent casually in a footnote. All the time he is shouting at us : ‘These are the Mountains, and this is Me!’—and thus went the truth that passed between us !’ And while he postures and proclaims, he succeeds in representing the mountains as so very big, and the charm and the business of the mountaineering hunt as so infinitely enduring, that we almost lose sight of himself in the course of his own domineering narrative. Only in the end to find that we have practically confused him with the Matterhorn, and that, whether we like him or not, his fidelity as a prophet

has earned him a higher form of immortality by identifying him in our memories with the greatness of the mountains, and of the mountaineering, which he so faithfully interpreted. He is, thus, a prophet in an almost biblical sense. He wrote under an inspiration which we feel to have been greater than himself, and which probably he himself only understood for the short space of his youth. To read the life-story of a personality in a human face we have but to look at two portraits reproduced in the *Alpine Journal*. The first is of a young man, with an uplifted, resolute look and large eyes full of inspiration; almost a beautiful face, but a face, if we look at it closely, at war with itself: the wilful downward turn of the mouth, an obstinate set of the jaw, are fighting to drag the eyes earthward. Instinctively we wonder which will win. The second is of the Titan in age, with the leonine head, the granite jaw, the penetrating eyes. And we must decide for ourselves which won—the eyes of the prophet or the mouth of the man. In the Whymper of the ‘Scrambles’ we have the Whymper of the inspired eyes, the herald of a message as rugged and as veracious as the mountains that inspired both it and him. Leslie Stephen has had many imitators. His recipe book has been plundered of everything but the light, unerring touch that mixed the inimitable proportions. Whymper founded no school. No one has succeeded in imitating anything but his egoism. Through the attitudes of the protagonists, the Ruskinian, the jovial, the patronising, the encyclopaedic, he crashed with a rude personal vehemence that remains hopelessly individual. If mountaineering owes its popularity to the good fortune of its having been first proclaimed by the Victorian arbiters of thought, it owes no less to the fact that Whymper’s great book appeared in the same great era. The discreet bias lent to their several messages by the eclecticism of the first prophets might have restricted the mountain propaganda to the circle of their particular adherents, and buried it with their brief autocracy. But Whymper’s directness, his disregard of contemporary formulae, his un-Victorian preference for banging his granite head into hills and things from the bottom, and not looking them over detachedly from the top, drove in from behind at a crucial moment; and sent the new fragmentary tables of stone scattering abroad on the crests of the lava-flood of novel ideas, which was spreading over this and other countries, to classes, professions, and populations, whose participation in the exclusive realms of art, exploration, gentlemanly adventure or sport had

never before been dreamed of. A little later, and the message would have come too late. There have been *many* later writers about mountains as faithful to fact, more understanding of sight, sensation, and of their exposition. But they have been able to write only for other mountaineers. Books have come in their flood; both reading and writing have become specialised; the collected edition of the Prophets is closed.

Is there, then, anything left to be said about mountaineering? It may have been gathered that I believe that the half has not yet been told us. The story of the mountaineering apocalypse has been the story of all other revelation. The message is first published by a group of interpreters, primitive or cultured. Each gives to his teaching his temperamental bias. As time goes on the doctrines become absorbed into contemporary life; their values alter as they are better assimilated or understood. Even so we later mountaineers have learned to convert to our needs more of now this, now that aspect of our pursuit. We can now distinguish, as one can from a greater distance, the clear depths of the water, where it is deep, from the reflecting shallows which dazzled the near view of the first discoverers. The Victorian books will always remain our authorised version, but we are free to read them in the light of longer experience, to sift the rendering which was ephemeral or individual from that which the contact of many minds through a number of years has shown to be fundamental experience, universally true. And we can proceed, if we so desire, to produce mountaineering chronicles upon that clearer, and deeper, foundation. We are still too ignorant about the profounder aspects of our relationship with the hills, about the subtler connexions between human personality and its environment, to be able to attempt, as yet, a revised version. Probably we can best serve our good mountaineering end by continuing to record truthfully our own modest experiences—experiences which should present, to be truthful, a rather larger proportion than is customary of our mental impressions and spiritual sensations, and a rather smaller proportion of merely nervous reactions, physical extensions, and gastric emotions. We should leave it to a later age—one which can explain all about electricity, magnetism, psychic currents, and the relations of matter and spirit—to use our faithful records as contributory evidences in the production of some final treatise upon mountaineering and its meaning for mankind. We should do so; and yet how few of us will find it possible to remain only

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But

truthful recording angels—never wander away into a little romantic speculation? A single sentence of W. H. Hudson's—greatest because most human of naturalists—may be enough at any moment to start us again in full cry after our chimera, the secret of the mountain spell, forgetful of how many previous theories, glinting alluringly ahead, have proved to be but the apples of Atalanta. Hudson is insisting that 'all the arts spring from one root, one impulse, the sense of beauty,' and from the desire to express it, 'which is not the overflow of sexual instinct' but an independent sense: 'I cannot follow him (Santayana) when he describes this sense of beauty and its outcome in its relation to the realities of life as the wild strawberry . . . which springs from the crevices of a granite mountain. . . . The truth is that the spirit, the sense and the impulse, has its roots very deep in the world and is in all sentient life: it is inherent in the granite itself and pervades it like a subtle fire.' If this be but another apple, it is, at all events, a golden one. Shall we, some day, really be able to say that the kinship which we feel with hills and with their sympathetic forces is the response to an innate, abstract sense of beauty, in many of us quickened to consciousness for the first time by an environment of mountains possessing, inferentially, a still larger part in its pervading inspiration? And the impulse to realise ourselves, to act, to create according to its dictation—is it this that makes us active mountaineers, as we know that it makes others painters or musicians? No mountain enthusiast could resist stooping to pick up such a suggestion as he ran his course, on the chance that it might prove at least as useful to his successors as the record of his own pedestrian hurry. For we know already that what a sculptor feels as he follows with hand or eye the curves of the marble he is shaping in accordance with his craving for beauty, the climber feels as he moulds snow or ice to his purpose, or as he achieves upon rock the completeness of his design. What the explorer seeks of novelty or beauty to content his desire, what the seaman rejoices in as he puts out from the land to master the laws that inspire the movements of winds and waters, what the naturalist detects of design and beauty in the details of growth and form and colour—all these the mountaineer may find equally responsive to his insatiable sense. He may find more. The same impulse which induces the musician to satisfy his sense of beauty in harmonies makes for the climber his peculiar delight in the rhythm of motion. But the climber is more than composer, more than virtuoso—he is

himself his own instrument. And there is no music so entralling to the senses as the perfection of harmony which a man may in the end achieve, and feel, in the ordered movement of his own limbs. The same impulse, again, which urges the artist to pursue beauty of line, harries the climber with a multiple opportunity. For, in the route which he makes up an untouched snow-slope or over a blotted sheet of mountain wall, he has not only the designer's pleasure, and the pleasure of the resultant effect, but he is himself, again, for all the time of execution, his own instrument, his own brush or pencil. He himself gives activity to each impulse, suffers each uncertainty while it lasts, wrestles with each surface check, thrills to each final advance! With this engaging supposition comfortably overtaken, and in our pockets, we have surely advanced a little nearer towards understanding how even our contemporaries may claim for their mountaineering chase something of the quality of a religion. It tempts us to concede the probability that, at moments when their sense of beauty is most keenly aroused, their impulse towards realising it most irrepressibly active—moments which are the especial privilege of mountaineers, for whom the mortal as well as the less material particles of personality are continuously penetrated with the glory of sight, of sound, and of touch, and with some curious consciousness of their affinity—the pleasant courses of their mountain pursuit may seem to such enthusiasts to be marked by recurring flashes of conviction that this community of sensation has its origin in some single, remote, and infinitely greater purpose of beauty. It almost persuades us to pardon, in anticipation, their successors, if, when they have followed the hunt a stage or two further, they may ask us to believe that men and mountains, for all their different form and measure of activity, are, in fact, momentary, and cognate, expressions of the incalculably greater impulse towards creation which is serving this ultimate sense of beauty in its own divine restlessness of progress towards an eventual, satisfying perfection of design.

GEOFFREY WINTHROP YOUNG.

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THE DIVERSIONS OF DAWSON.

BY BENNET COPPLESTONE.

BOOK II. NED GRIMES, DECK HAND.

III.—AT THE WRECK INQUIRY.

THE *Willing Maid* descended to her sea grave in seven fathoms of water about the middle of May, but it was not until the following October that the wreck inquiry, ordered by the Board of Trade, opened in the Old Court House at Plymouth. That Fairy Godmother of the English sailorman, who before the world is austere described as the Mercantile Marine Department of the Board of Trade, carries no magic wand in her umbrella case. Her ingenious slaves are disguised in the habit of solicitors, and their energies are expended not in devising miracles but in the collection of mundane evidence which takes up much time. A wreck inquiry is not a trial. There is no plaintiff or defendant, there is no prisoner or indictment by the Crown. Legal representatives of owners and officers and underwriters and of the Fairy Godmother herself sit, as it were, in friendly conference around a table, and seek amidst the conflict of statements and verbal evidence and of correspondence to grope towards the hidden truth. There is about the proceedings an air of smooth urbanity, as if Truth herself were presiding at the exploration of her well; and yet now and then there will come a sharp tinkle as of steel touching steel; and the onlooker is reminded that all the suavity and velvet softness of the surface covers, without concealing, a stern remorseless purpose. The Wreck Commissioner, supported on either hand by nautical and engineering assessors, is as intent upon sifting truth from falsehood as is the Judge at a trial for murder.

During these long and aggravating months which stretched from May until October I saw nothing of Dawson—who, I was convinced, had deliberately withdrawn from me his deftly modelled countenance—though of young Matthew Jubb and of his competent wife, Mistress Nell, it was my happiness to see a good deal. These months were big with fate for those hardly used married lovers, Mat and Nell, whom the war and its attendant circumstances had chucked about without chucking agreeably together. I perceived

in the loss of the *Willing Maid* an opportunity for pushing the humble fortunes of the guileless Jubb, who, though blind as a bat to the naughtiness of the world, yet possessed in his intractable honesty no small asset in a generally dishonest society. To me it seemed that one of the *uberrima fides* brand—as he was beyond a doubt, though deficient in intelligence—should be employed in that City quarter where the value of the utmost good faith is adequately appreciated. He had not the resources in capital to put up for membership of Lloyd's, but he might, with some slight boosting from behind, climb up to a small niche on the fringes of the building. It happened that among the firms of brokers who would be spared heavy losses over the *Willing Maid*—if the result of the inquiry justified the repudiation of their honour policies—there was one firm of which the partners were close friends of my own. To them I waxed eloquent concerning the merits of Matthew Jubb, and pointed out—which was the one true and effective paragraph in my imaginative statement of particulars—that, but for Jubb's visit to me and his exposure of the wrecker of St. Michael's Alley, their firm would have been the poorer by some eight thousand pounds. 'Employ some fragment of that noble salvage,' suggested I, 'in providing a salary and a job for Mat Jubb.' It will be observed that I placed the salary first; it was of that Mat was most in need. In this fashion I brought Jubb and the partners together, and adroitly added Mistress Nell so that strict business might acquire some flavour of sentiment. They were good souls, those insurance brokers, upon whom the war had showered much wealth and had not spoiled in the giving of it. They promised to give Mat every chance of making good in their office, and, what was almost Oriental in its munificent generosity, offered him the further assurance that they would lend him the money to qualify as a member of Lloyd's should his performance come up to my representations of his merits. At this I felt some twinges of conscience—an experience with me uncommon—yet the chance for Mat Jubb was worth a bold lie or two. After all he might not be wholly an ass; in the work of brokerage and in the manipulation of underwriters personal charm is frequently more potent than brains. So Mat Jubb got the promise of his salary, a modest one to begin with, and the prospect of future affluence; his feet were set upon the ladder, and with Mistress Nell to inspire his efforts—it was a pity that she could not take on the job herself—he might climb up a rung or two.

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So here was the income provided for the little home with the small garden ; all that we needed now was the home itself. The savings of Mat and Nell were manifestly insufficient to purchase the most meagre of residences in these days of inflated values, and I would not hear of a return to poky lodgings at Chelsea or anywhere else. 'Nell,' I said firmly, 'if you will back me up and pay no attention whatever to that ridiculous husband of yours, I will get you that home. If Mat opens his ugly mouth, just stuff Abe Lincoln down his throat.' 'I will,' replied Nell, a great girl worth fifty Mat Jubbs. The next step was to make interest with the Profiteers in collusion with Nell though unbeknownst to Mat. I went and called upon them in their house in Berkeley Street, and found them deficient in grammar yet overflowing with the milk of human kindness. For years they had been spending money like water and deriving no satisfaction from it ; they leaped at the opportunity of really enjoying what the Old Man called a bit of a bust. 'Bust!' scornfully snapped the Missis. 'We can make Mat and Nell happy for less than the cost of a new car, and we 'ave more cars halready than we know what the blazes to do with. Why shouldn't them two dears come and live with us ? Mat can drive our cars as he did afore, and Nell can play at 'ousekeeping if she's too proud to sit around twiddling 'er thumbs like the real lady that she is.' Adroitly I appealed to her vast experience of life, and hinted that young married creatures were kittle folk who were best left to their own devices ; they could only acquire the wisdom of middle age by breaking their shins over the mistakes of youth. The Missis agreed. She consented to the separate establishment, but made one unalterable condition. 'I'm not going to buy no 'ouse for that 'orty young Mat. 'E's as poor and proud as a dook, and if we gave 'im an 'ouse, as like as not 'e would just throw it back in our faces. No, no, sir. Not for yours trewly. We will buy the 'ouse and make it over to Nell. She shall 'ave it for 'er very own, and if Mat makes any of 'is funny business over it she can just put 'im out on the doorstep to cool. Nell is a proper woman with no nonsense about 'er. Mat is a feckless child, a man what never grows up, like you, sir, and my Old Man yonder. Where would you men be without us, I asks you ? Children, playing at life. Bah !' I assured the Missis that I was in full agreement with her. Women, beside those incorrigible sentimentalists called men, were hard, practical creatures who alone could be entrusted with the management of serious

affairs—such as homes. The Old Man also concurred with the proposals of his Missis, and the conference ended more fruitfully than is the way with most conferences—especially those conducted exclusively by the male sex. Had women been in charge of the thirteen or fourteen International excursions in futility . . . but that speculation is outside the limits of this veracious narrative.

So, with the speed and effectiveness of the illimitable purse—which so rarely can purchase anything which counts towards human happiness—the small house with its little garden was bought and paid for. It was bought in the name of Mistress Nell, and, under the provisions of the Married Women's Property Act, its disposition and employment were hers alone, free from interference by any husband or husbands. I relished Mat's conflict of emotions when the deeds were handed over to Nell in my presence by the two darling Profiteers. He was furious, yet his tongue was tied by common politeness. I watched all the emotions which chased one another around his speaking countenance, and grinned at him openly and derisively. Nell behaved most prettily. She kissed us all round—the Missis, the Old Man, and me. 'It was all your doing,' she whispered tenderly in my aged ear. Then she approached Mat. He pecked at her cheek, the surly brute! 'I shall pay rent for the house,' growled he. 'That is as you please,' sweetly returned Mistress Nell. 'The house is my very own, and I shall quite enjoy being your landlady. If the rent is not paid the moment it is due I can give you notice to quit.' She smiled adorably at him, and he had the grace to laugh. 'Now kiss me properly,' said Nell.

All these pleasant excursions into business and domesticity—including the second honeymoon at Bridport Harbour which Mat and Nell had promised to themselves in some small compensation for the two wasted years of separation—all of them were compressed into the interval of months between the loss of the *Willing Maid* and the opening of the wreck inquiry. No one has ever accused a Government Department of haste and levity in the discharge of its statutory functions. Mat, who had been summoned as a witness, and I, who had secured admission as an interested spectator, travelled down to Plymouth together and established ourselves in an hotel on the Hoe. I always plant myself upon the Hoe whenever I visit Plymouth. I love to gaze forth over that peerless Sound, which is spread at one's feet as upon a huge map and really looks the Imperial Harbour that it

is and has been. I watch the big ships thread the many-hairpinned channel which winds round the western end of the breakwater, and at sundown await with eagerness that little twinkle upon the horizon which springs from the lighthouse upon the Eddystone. There before one is the whole of England's sea history, all laid out flat as upon a map.

We entered the Court House eagerly expectant of revelations, but had not been there long before the leisurely procedure had effectively chilled us to the bone. For a while it was the dreariest affair. In an ordinary Court there is the presentation of a case which, whether established later on by evidence or not, stimulates the interest and suggests dramatic possibilities. Here at this inquiry we seemed to be listening to a story which hadn't any plot. It wandered to and fro, occupying hours and days, without appearing to arrive anywhere. And yet if one attended carefully—which was not easy to a twentieth-century mind debauched by trivial newspapers and snappy cinema films—there were to be perceived indications of a concealed purpose. Day after day the facts slowly emerged. The skipper and the chief engineer were called early in the proceedings. They described the ship, her equipment and her engines, and gave their own version of the final catastrophe. They were cross-examined by counsel for the Board of Trade—it seemed to me with extraordinary gentleness—and their stories were unshaken. The *Willing Maid*, it was declared, was carefully navigated, and the engines, though old and worn, were adequate to her propulsion. She had struck upon some sunken object, presumably an unknown victim of German submarines, her bottom had been ripped out, and she had sunk within half an hour. Discipline had been preserved and no lives lost.

'What made you run so very near to the coast?' whispered Counsel for the Board. 'It was my proper course to clear the Start,' replied Captain Plumbridge. 'I had plenty of water under me for safe navigation in good weather.'

Chief Engineer Rosie said nothing about his 'bag of hammers,' though he admitted that the extreme slowness of the steamer called for explanation. He had been afraid, he said, to push his boilers beyond seventy pounds of steam. I saw one of the engineer assessors raise his eyebrows, yet the condition of the boilers was not further examined.

There was something very queer going on. It was plain, even to my rather bored stupidity, that these principal officers—and also the first mate who followed—were being permitted to have

things pretty much their own way. Their stories were not challenged, though, in the gentle cross-examination, some small doubts were hinted which made the witnesses anxious to underline their statements. They had obviously conferred together and had engaged with one another to tell exactly the same story. What the Board of Trade seemed bent upon doing was to hold them down to it, to wrap them round with it, so that there could be no shadow of doubt about their description of the events leading up to the disaster and of the disaster itself. As this theory of the inquiry began to suggest itself to me I sat up and my interest grew. If my notion had any substance in it, then the Board's purpose was to entangle these witnesses in their own evidence, and then to spring upon them something which they would be totally unable to reconcile with it. They would then stand forth as three liars self-convicted.

The owner did not appear. Matthew Jubb was called as his representative on board the vessel, and told the truth in so far as he had seen it. His version of the occurrences which led up to the wreck, and the story of the wreck itself, supported the three officers of the ship. Mat had seen nothing except what it was intended that he should see. The talk of the officers, and the description of Ned Grimes, which enlivened my last chapter, did not appear at all in Mat's evidence as retailed to the Court. He answered the questions put to him, and offered nothing which went outside them. He told of the insurances which he had placed, and the details were confirmed by evidence given on behalf of the underwriters. The facts of the insurances were established beyond question, but, to my astonishment, the owner, Robert Bonnefant, was not required to furnish any explanation. The whole business began to take on an air of unreality. If the inquiry continued in this singularly unpenetrative fashion for a few more days, upon my word, the wrecker of St. Michael's Alley would be exonerated and left to collect from the underwriters some sixty-six thousand pounds in gratifying compensation for the throwing away of his twopenny-halfpenny steamer. I had not the faintest doubt of his guilt, though the Court of Inquiry were in no hurry to establish it. They were not, so far as I could perceive, making an effort—confound their legal red tape! At the end of the fifth day of this interminable sand-ploughing inquisition I had accumulated an exceedingly ill humour, which I vented upon my luckless companion Mat Jubb. If I could not be happy myself I could at least enjoy the sight of unhappiness in him. So I hinted viciously that his

new employers, mulcted in eight thousand pounds, would speedily apply to him the axe of dismissal, and that he and Nell would be again thrust forth upon divergent courses. 'Oh, we can't now,' cried he aghast. 'Can't you?' said I, gloating horribly.

Then came the opening of the sixth day, that day which I shall always remember with the purest enjoyment. Three words were spoken, three words which awoke into activity the shambling figure of a man who was, from the moment of his sudden appearance, to dominate the Court and charge its dismal atmosphere with vitalising electricity.

'Call Ned Grimes.' I heard the words whispered by the leading Counsel for the Board of Trade, and there climbed into the witness stand that deck hand whom Mat Jubb had described to me so faithfully that I recognised on the instant the accuracy of his portrait. There he stood, dressed for effect in a neat blue sailor's rig—which he had spoiled by coiling a dirty red scarf around his neck—and grinning sheepishly at Bench and Bar. The black, crumbling teeth, which had impressed themselves upon Mat, were distinctly visible between the man's curling lips; short sandy hair stood up all over his head; and though the Board's solicitor had procured him a new suit of clothes, he had omitted to instruct Grimes to wash his face and hands before he put it on. 'Grimes!' cried Mat so loudly that the Wreck Commissioner frowned upon him. 'What's the good of calling that doddering idiot?'

'Silence in Court!'

'Mr. Ned Grimes,' began the counsel for the Board politely, 'you were, I understand, one of the crew of the *Willing Maid*?'

'Deck 'and,' said Grimes, grinning again horribly so that the gaps in his dental equipment were manifest to all within range. 'I come aboard in the bight of a rope because I was too far drunk to climb the ladder. But I was not so very drunk as that seemed.'

'Why did you join the ship?'

'I signed on,' replied Grimes. Here the Board's solicitor whispered, and Counsel did not pursue the inquiry.

'In whose watch were you on board?'

'The second mate's, Mr. Goodchild. It was hard on me, for I had to serve in both watches, Mr. Goodchild's and the first mate's. This did not give me time for my proper sleep.'

'Why did you serve in both watches?'

'One on deck with the second mate because I had to. And one between decks because I wanted to see what was happening to the *Willing Maid*. I had me suspicions from the first, I had.'

'Why . . . ?' Again the solicitor whispered sharply and Counsel pulled up.

'How did you follow out the line of your suspicions ?'

'I kep' my eye on the engynes,' said Grimes. 'That Rosie is a bad lot, and the skipper Plumbridge ain't no better. They was always putting their 'eads together, they and that little swine of a first mate. I knew that if they wanted to sink the *Willing Maid* they would start by playing monkey tricks with the engynes.'

'Come, come,' reproved the Counsel, who had been exchanging rapid whispers with the instructing solicitor and was beginning to enjoy Mr. Grimes. 'Come, come. You must confine yourself to facts. You must not speak in that fashion of the officers.'

'Facs !' roared Ned Grimes. 'I'll give 'em facs. I be just stuffed full of facs.'

The Court was by this time very wide awake. The legal representatives of officers and owner were all consulting with their clients and throwing apprehensive glances up at Grimes. Counsel for the underwriters was grinning almost as widely as Grimes himself. Counsel for the Board had at last got the hang of his brief. For my part I was trying not to laugh so violently that I should suffer expulsion from the Court : I would sooner have burst.

Upon this scene of imminent disorder there fell the cool accents of the Commissioner. 'If Mr.—er—Ned Grimes be permitted to give his evidence in his own way the time of the Court may possibly be economised.'

The man Grimes was quick to take advantage of this generous invitation to monopolise the stage ; like the Ancient Mariner he held us with his glittering eye, which that purblind Mat Jubb had called dull.

'Facs !' he repeated. 'I'll give those three beauties more facs than they've stomach for. Goodchild wasn't in it, nor was the second engineer ; it was those three—Plumbridge, Rosie, and the first officer, Gilkison. I watched 'em close, I did, especially that Rosie. I hung around the engine-room skylight when I was on deck, and kept as near as I could to the railing when below. I got them all in the 'abit of seeing me there. They thought I was in a fever with cold. I got them so used to me that presently Rosie took no more 'eed of me than a pillar or a post. I had decided, no matter why, that Rosie would fake a collision with the engynes and sink the ship before ever we got clear of the Channel. And since he wouldn't want a longer boat voyage than he could

help, he would choose some nice spot near the Start or wait till he was off Mount's Bay. After we had passed Torbay and got near the Devon coast I just lived every minute with my eyes on the engine-room. No one spotted what I was after; I was only a doddering old deck 'and. Crikey, gents, it was a gyne!

There were white faces in that little Court House. I saw Plumbridge, Rosie, and the mate Gilkison edge towards the door, and I also saw Ned Grimes, the doddering old deck 'and in the witness box, turn his head and raise one finger. A large policeman arose, slipped round to the door, and locked it.

Ned Grimes went on:

'That feller Rosie 'as told you that the collision 'appened when the second engineer was on duty. So it did, and so I was sure all along that it would. Of course it would—any fool could guess that. But, sirs, Rosie was there too. I am not quite certain of the time: my costume was not suited to a wrist watch. It was in the middle watch on Saturday morning: two bells 'ad gone—say about 1.15 A.M. I was watching after Mr. Goodchild and that there gentleman, Mr. Jubb, had turned in. Rosie came into the engine-room, told the second engineer that he was worried about the bearings of the propeller shaft, and ordered him into the tunnel to inspect. "Those bearings are running 'ot," says 'e, "and maybe the thrust block would stand looking over." As soon as Storey, the second engineer, had vanished aft, I saw Rosie go to the hand wheels which controlled the bilge valves, the sea cocks, you know, and open 'em one after the other.'

The Counsel for the owner, Bonnefant, was on his feet in a moment. 'M'lud,' cried he, 'I object to positive statements like this from such a witness. What can a deck hand, and, I should judge, an extremely ignorant one, know about bilge valves?'

'You will have an opportunity to cross-examine,' observed the Commissioner. 'The witness seems to me to be a man of some intelligence.'

Ned Grimes gave us a full view of his decayed tombstones as he grinned scornfully.

'I know more'n you may think. I baint no beauty, but 'andsome is as 'andsome does. I did those three beauties 'andsome that night. Rosie opened the valves and let the sea flow in for about ten minutes. Then he marched over to the lever which controlled the link motion and reversed the engynes with a full 'ead of steam in the cylinders. The engynes just screamed with the agony of it, and the jolt to the ship of the sudden reverse was

like hitting a dock wall. I saw what was coming and got a tight hold with 'ands and legs, but I was near tore to bits. The second engineer, who was well-nigh killed in the shaft tunnel, came scrambling up, but by that time Rosie had jammed the control lever back into the forrard position and turned off the steam. The engynes were just wreckage. "We've struck something," called out Rosie, and bolted up to the deck. I followed, and saw him talking earnestly with the skipper on the bridge. Meanwhile the bilge valves stayed open: Rosie had forgotten them, or maybe was feared to touch them with Storey about. I looked overside. The *Willing Maid* was already down below her marks. She was drifting with the tide and filling fast. Then Rosie came running down—'e's a rotten bungler at sinking a ship so as to escape notice—ordered Storey out of the engine-room, and then tried to close the valves. I see 'im at it. But they wouldn't close, not 'arf they wouldn't.'

'Why was that, do you suppose?' asked the Commissioner, prompted by one of his assessors.

'Maybe the shock 'ad upset the gear,' observed Grimes indifferently. 'He couldn't close 'em nohow, and the *Willing Maid* sank with the valves wide open.'

'If this be true,' observed the Commissioner, 'and the truth can be tested, the circumstance was extremely fortunate—in the interest of justice.'

'Oly old Justice got a bit of a clinch on those three treats that night, and Ned Grimes giv 'er an 'elping 'and,' said the witness, whose manner of speech varied most remarkably. At one moment he talked with a rich Cockney whine; at another with the tongue of a half-educated Board-school teacher who was trying to conceal his homely origin. The lack of uniformity in Ned Grimes's speech was the one blot upon what was in other respects a highly artistic performance.

Then Grimes proceeded to describe the get-away in boats, and repeated his sure conviction that of the officers Goodchild and Storey were innocent, whereas the other three members of the afterguard were black with sin. 'By the way,' added he carelessly, 'you can scratch off Mr. Jubb's name. He was no worse than the owner's billy-goat.' I laid a hand on the furious Jubb, urging him to sit quiet. 'After all,' I whispered, 'you owe something to Grimes. He has not been precisely tactful, but he has cleared you of complicity. He might have classed you with his three beauties.'

Counsel for Robert Bonnefant rose, frowning savagely. This circumstantial story of Ned Grimes had been sprung upon him, and he guessed that there might be disastrous corroboration to follow. He was uncertain how to deal with it. 'M'lud,' said he, 'I am unable to cross-examine to effect until this wholly incredible string of falsehoods, as detailed by this Ned Grimes, has been examined by my clients and new instructions given to me. I will ask in a few moments for an adjournment. In the meantime it may be of help to my outraged clients and to the Court if I put a few simple questions to the witness.'

'Now, Grimes,' he roared, 'attend to me. Who instructed you to go on board the *Willing Maid* and spy upon the officers?'

'Who instructed me?' muttered Grimes.

'Yes. You signed on two days before the vessel sailed. Who told you to do so?'

'I told myself, sir.'

'Do you swear that no one—the underwriters for example—paid you to ship in the *Willing Maid*?'

'I'll swear it fine, as long as you like.'

'Your answer is as incredible as your story. If you went on board in the ordinary way as a deck hand, what made you turn suspicious and set up this alleged watch upon your officers?'

'Oh,' said Grimes easily, 'that's easy answered. I did not go on board in the ordinary way as a deck hand. I went to keep an eye on those very gents who tried just now to get out of the Court, and came back because they found the door was locked.'

The Court stared at him, and the Counsel gasped. For Grimes had spoken decisively in an entirely new voice and one wholly out of keeping with his assumed character.

The Wreck Commissioner spoke up sternly. 'What is this? Is that man a deck hand who witnessed those events concerning which he has sworn? And if not, what does he here? Although this Court has no criminal jurisdiction, it is nevertheless a tribunal of justice.'

The Counsel and solicitor for the Board of Trade put their heads together. Then the K.C. rose, looking embarrassed, as well he might.

'I am instructed that Mr.—er—Ned Grimes refused to appear except in the character as deck hand in which he served on board the *Willing Maid*. He is, I understand, a masterful personage. Perhaps, now that the whole value of his surprising evidence depends upon his credibility, he will disclose to the Court his true identity.'

'It should have been disclosed at the beginning. This Court is not a theatre. Who are you, man?'

Grimes smiled. 'My evidence does not depend upon my credibility. It is buttressed much more strongly than that. The *Willing Maid* sank with her valves fully open in seven fathoms of water. My evidence will not lack corroboration. I have seen to that very thoroughly.'

'Who are you?' repeated the Commissioner.

'You wouldn't 'ardly believe me if I told you, me lord. That gent there would say it was as incredible as all the rest of the story. Just pass me up that bundle, please.'

The Board's solicitor handed up to Grimes a small bundle tied in a spotted handkerchief. 'If you will excuse me, my lord and gentlemen, I will do a bit of toilet.'

All glared in astonishment while Grimes opened his bundle and proceeded to do his bit of toilet. All, that is, except myself. I had recognised him at the moment when he went into the box—recognised him as readily by his surgically clipped ears as I used to do in the days of war before he sought the assistance of a surgeon. The 'Darwin's point' which marked his wolfish ancestry was gone, and the lobes of his ears no longer adhered to the cheek bones, but to my eye he was always instantly manifest in his true identity.

Grimes removed his disfiguring woollen comforter and disclosed underneath a white collar and tie. He took a sponge, poured from a bottle some drops upon it, passed it over his hair once or twice, and lo! the ugly sandy colour had vanished: in its place was a decent brown. He put a hand to his mouth: out came the black decayed tombstones, and in their place was snapped a double set of handsome porcelain ivories. He grinned at us to emphasise the change in dentition. Then, as we watched, the artist before us moulded his face, first cleaning it with spirit. The nose straightened, the puffed-out cheeks fell in, the brow—somehow, I cannot tell how—which had been mean became wide and deep. The whole form and character of the face, as he removed insets here and inserted them there, was transformed before our eyes. The deck hand, ugly, unkempt, and ill-favoured, passed away, and there stood in his place a slight, well-set-up, stern-looking gentleman in a neatly fitting blue suit. The clothes were unchanged, yet the manner in which they were worn made them look wholly different.

'Now,' said the Wreck Commissioner, 'after this interesting performance has been completed to your satisfaction—it should

never have been rendered necessary—will you kindly tell us, sir, who and what you are ?’

‘I crave the pardon of the Court,’ said Grimes humbly. ‘If I had not appeared here as the deck hand known in the *Willing Maid*, my identity with him would never have found believers. That was why I insisted, in the interests of justice, upon giving evidence in my ship character. I am, my lord, William Dawson, Chief Inspector, Criminal Investigation Department, New Scotland Yard.’

For once in his career my friend Dawson, an insatiable glutton, received an adequate bellyful of public appreciation. The Court, members of the Bar, witnesses, and spectators—all except the three officers of the *Willing Maid* and the self-controlled Bench—broke into a storm of applause. Grave men waved papers above their heads and stamped furiously on the floor boards. Dawson, his features expanding like the petals of a sun-kissed flower, bowed in acknowledgment. I permitted my pent-up laughter to break out until the tears ran down my cheeks, and Mat Jubb—to whom Dawson had been an ogre and Ned Grimes a figure of contempt—found relief for his days of anxiety in generous appreciation. To him the revelation that Ned Grimes was Dawson, and that the Grimes-Dawson combination had saved his job and his little home, far more than compensated for all that he had suffered at Dawson’s ruthless hands.

The Wreck Commissioner permitted the riotous scene to run its course and then checked the unseemly noise with a gesture.

‘We will now proceed with the inquiry,’ said he coldly. ‘I understand that Chief Inspector Dawson, in his proper person, has further evidence to give.’

Dawson stood briskly up to attention. His voice, strangely altered in tone by the double set of efficient porcelains, rang out with a note of triumph. He told how, after being landed at Dartmouth, he had provided himself with a change of clothes, and then, resuming his own official identity—the one to which his colleagues were best accustomed—had proceeded to Plymouth and sent in his credentials to the Admiral’s secretary. He told his story and asked for the assistance of a Navy tug and divers so that the *Willing Maid* might be examined immediately as she lay. The Admiral, after communicating with London, placed his resources at the disposal of the Law, so that on the day following an inspection party set off, found the wreck without difficulty, and made a thorough investigation of her hull and engines. ‘My lord,’ said

Dawson, 'the officer who commanded the Admiralty tug is here at the disposition of the Court. With him are the two divers who surveyed the *Willing Maid*. I will not anticipate their evidence except to say that the bottom of the steamer is entirely uninjured, and that she lies with the sea cocks fully open. The Court, when it has heard what these witnesses have to tell, will be in a position to determine whether the evidence of Ned Grimes, deck hand, is worthy of credence.' He left the witness stand, and again a roar of applause irrepressibly burst forth.

'I thank you, Mr. Dawson,' said the Wreck Commissioner, his lips relaxing into a smile—'or perhaps I should say, Mr. Ned Grimes. The proceedings to-day have been gravely irregular. Had I known in advance of the theatrical display which we have been privileged to observe, I should have forbidden its performance. And yet I must concede that the interests of justice were served by it. I shall take an early opportunity of commending Chief Inspector Dawson's conspicuous ability and zeal to the attention of his official superiors.'

'I thank your lordship,' replied Dawson. 'I may add—though the matter is not one which directly affects this inquiry—that the facts concerning the loss of the *Willing Maid*, which it has been my privilege to bring to light, have been laid before the Public Prosecutor. At the rising of this Court I shall myself take into custody the persons of Captain Plumbridge, Chief Engineer Rosie, and the First Officer Gilkison.' He looked at his watch. 'I may further inform the Court that just twenty-five minutes ago Mr. Robert Bonnefant, the owner of the steamer, was arrested by my orders at his office in St. Michael's Alley.'

At the close of a perfect day Dawson dined with me at my hotel upon the Hoe. Every time I looked across the table at him, and contrasted the trim figure in well-cut dinner jacket with the dirty tousled Ned Grimes of the morning, I rumbled with internal laughter. Time could not wither nor custom stale his infinite variety; he had always surprises in store even for me his friend and biographer. Mat Jubb, who dined with us, was stricken dumb. He dared not open his mouth, except sparingly to eat, in the awe-inspiring presence of his formidable companion at my table. He felt like a very small boy under the shadow of a very large policeman, as if at any moment he might be seized and led forth to instant execution. Towards me Dawson condescended, but to Jubb he was haughtily distant. He could not forget that

as Ned Grimes in the *Willing Maid* he had been an object of contumely. Jubb had seen his body come aboard in the bight of a rope and a fire-hose turned upon it; it was all in the way of business, yet Dawson could not pardon any witness of Grimes's humiliation.

We smoked after dinner in the winter garden whence, through tall sheets of plate glass, one looked out over the Sound now glittering like a bath of quicksilver under the nearly full moon. I deemed that the occasion was opportune for the final revelation.

'Dawson,' said I, 'months ago you hinted that the full truth is rarely told even at a wreck inquiry. I suspect—I feel sure—that there is much to tell into my private ear which neither Grimes nor Dawson would ever permit to be disclosed in a public Court.'

'Do you hint that I, a loyal officer of police, would stoop to rig the scales of Justice?'

'Perhaps not. But if blind Justice were in peril of stumbling, I fancy that Dawson would not withhold a guiding hand. I am a man of simple faith, yet it strains my credulity to believe that two miracles would occur at the precisely apposite moment when they were required to round off your incomplete devices. The sudden reversal of the *Willing Maid's* engines might have dealt a shock sufficient to put them permanently out of action; also it might not. It was urgent for your plans that it should. You are not a man to submit willingly to the sport of chance. Then that most opportune jamming of the Kingston valves. Rosie had opened them, but, a few minutes later, they unaccountably refused to close. I have intelligence sufficient to perceive that if the *Willing Maid's* engines had continued to work, and had the valves been susceptible to Rosie's manipulation, the steamer would not have sunk in the seven fathoms which laid her open to the inspection of naval divers. Your plans for the confusion of Bonnefant, Plumbridge, Rosie, and Gilkison, and for the enhanced glory of William Dawson, had they depended for fulfilment upon mere chance, might have failed to come off. They probably would. Is there not a little something more to tell, you incorrigible schemer?'

This I said knowing well how dearly Dawson loved an audience. For months he had kept silence; with respect to the inner workings of his plans he would be condemned always to keep silence in public; and complete unbroken silence was for him to suffer the tortures of the damned. While he reflected and hesitated, greatly tempted to make a small display before us, I passed him a decanter of port. As he filled a bumper he fell.

'No larks,' said he. 'What I now tell you two must go no

farther until those four priceless spoils of my victory have been stowed away in gaol. And then only in the fashion and guise of a fictitious story. I took big risks in the *Willing Maid*. For I was not alone. There was one man in the steamer who knew that Ned Grimes was other than he seemed. This was Storey, the second engineer. I commanded his services and paid him for them before I signed on as deck hand. Those three officers in Bonenfant's pay, who had engaged to sink the ship, had no more notion than Mr. Jubb here that Ned Grimes and Storey, his pledged man, were out to spoil their game. Without Storey's help I could have done little except keep close watch upon Rosie; with his aid I could reply to every move of Rosie's by a counter-move of my own. I determined that if the *Willing Maid* was sunk she should go to the bottom in shallow water. It was Storey who guessed what Rosie would do, and made ready the engines so that they would surely collapse when an unwonted strain was thrown upon them. It was not difficult. He was a smart, sober man, while Rosie was always half muzzy with drink. Storey manipulated the eccentrics and the connecting rods so knowingly and thoroughly that when Rosie threw them suddenly into reverse, under a full head of steam, they tumbled into ruin like a heap of spillikins. You never saw such a mess. The Admiralty divers, who examined them at the bottom of the sea, declared that they must have been made of lead stuck together with solder. That explains your first miracle. The other was even simpler. When Rosie went on deck, leaving the bilge valves open, I gave Storey the tip and he spiked the spur gear which operated them. I never wish to work with a man with a livelier freedom from scruples. Yes, Storey earned his pay, which I shall now proceed to collect from the underwriters. But you will see that not a whisper of all this can come out in Court, and Storey must be kept at all hazards out of the witness box. We've got him shipped as chief engineer in a China tramp. He won't be back within a year good. He and I together put those finishing touches on the wreckers' designs which turned a crude daub into a perfect picture: the engines a heap of spillikins and the valves spiked hard! It was beautiful, sir, just beautiful!

'A great artist was lost in you, Dawson, when you turned policeman.'

'Lost!' cried Dawson. 'No, sir. Not lost. Found!'

Postscript to Author's Proof.—Mat Jubb has wired to say that Abe Lincoln is a girl.

LITERARY ACROSTICS.

THE Editor of the CORNHILL MAGAZINE offers prizes to the value of at least £3 to the most successful solvers of this series of four Literary Acrostics. There will also be consolation prizes, two or more in number: the winners of these will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. And, further, every month a similar prize of books will be awarded to the sender of the correct solution that is first opened.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 6.

(The Second of the Series.)

'He felt the cheering power of spring,
It made him whistle, it made him sing.'
'Down on his knees the Bishop fell,
And faster and faster his beads did he tell.'

1. 'She stood breast-high amid the corn,
Clasp'd by the golden light of morn.'
2. 'The people said that she was blue :
But I was green, and loved her dearly.
She was approaching thirty-two ;
And I was then eleven, nearly.'
3. 'From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror.'
4. 'To spicy groves where he had won
His plumage of resplendent hue,
His native fruits, and skies, and sun,
He bade adieu.'
5. 'So you walk softly and look sweetly and
say nothing, I am yours.'

RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed above 'Book Notes' on a later page.
4. At the foot of his answer every solver must write his pseudonym (consisting of one word), and nothing else. His name and address should be written at the back. References (if sent), questions, or comments should be on another paper.

5. Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.

6. Answers to Acrostic No. 6 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50A Albemarle Street, London, W. 1, and must arrive not later than August 20.

PROEM: Tennyson, *Sir Galahad*; and
Idylls of the King, The Marriage
of Geraint.

ANSWER TO No. 5.

1.	G	limmerin	G
2.	A	ppetit	E
3.	L	aughte	R
4.	A	nthe	A
5.	H	ath	I
6.	A	dor	N
7.	D	us	T

LIGHTS:

1. Gray, *Elegy*.
2. Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, iii. 4.
3. Milton, *L'Allegro*.
4. Herrick, *Hesperides*: *To Anthea,*
who may command him anything.
5. Kipling, *The Second Jungle Book*:
How Fear came.
6. Johnson, *The Vanity of Human*
Wishes.
7. Scott, *The Betrothed*, ch. 20, Song.

Acrostic No. 4 ('Pilgrim Fathers') proved very difficult. No light remained unsolved, and yet every solver missed at least two points. Five solvers missed 2 lights, four missed 3, ten failed in 4, and seventeen in more than 4. There was also one answer with no pseudonym at the foot, and no address.

RESULT OF THE FIRST SERIES.

The maximum number of points obtainable was 35, and the leading competitors are Lilian, Ubique, and Wynell, who scored 33, followed by Kipper and Oiseau, with 32, and then Lemma with 31. These six solvers win the prizes. Lilian is Mrs. Snow, Northdown Hill School, Cliftonville, Margate; Ubique is Major Luard, 14 Woodlane, Falmouth; Wynell is Mr. E. W. M. Lloyd, Hartford House, Hartley Wintney, Hants: each of them will receive a cheque for £1. Kipper is Mrs. E. M. Thurnam, 97 Highbury New Park, London, N. 5; Oiseau is Miss Corisande Bridges, 7 Alexandra Road, Clifton, Bristol; and Lemma is Mr. D. M. Campbell, Silverhow, Grasmere, Westmoreland: these three will choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

These six solvers will be ineligible for prizes in the second series, now running, except in the possible, but improbable, event of their solutions being the only correct ones in any particular month: in such a case, one of them could take the book prize.

